

Hafa Adai!

Kilili: Add Marianas to SNAP; Ayuda Act is reintroduced. PAGE 3
DPW issues another stop-work order against IPI. PAGE 4

75¢

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PSS to start blended learning

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Starting Feb. 2, the Public School System will be transitioning from remote learning to “blended learning”—a mix of in-person classes and online instruction. *See Page 2 for more details*

Saying this is a step closer to some normalcy for students, Education Commissioner Dr.

Alfred B. Ada said that blended learning is the safest way to have students

RELATED NEWS

► **BLENDED LEARNING.**
PAGE 2



Ada

on campus for now.

Under the blended learning set-up, students on some days will attend a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting. On other days, students will independently complete online or paper-based learning packet components of the course outside the classroom. With this learning mode, attendance of

See PSS on Page 4

2nd stimulus direct deposit portal now open

» **Those who register may start getting the money by this week**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Payments, better known as the second stimulus checks

The CNMI stimulus web portal is now open to receive banking information for direct deposit of the Second Economic Impact



Atalig

The Department of Finance opened over the weekend the second stimulus direct deposit portal, stimulus.dof.gov.mp, which means that those who register on the

portal may start getting their money by this week. The portal allows an eligible person to register to receive his/her federal stimulus payment directly in his/her bank account via bank deposit, known as Auto-

ON THE NET
► stimulus.dof.gov.mp

See STIMULUS on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Jan 24, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,521	26	7,547
Recovered	7,274	19	7,293
Active	100	26	126
Deaths	128	0	128
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			111,079

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	129	3	132
Traced via Travel Screening	103	3	106
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			158

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

IPI pays over 300 employees

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has paid over 300 employees five payrolls' worth of their salaries.

In a status report filed with the U.S District Court for the NMI last Friday, former IPI general counsel Michael Dotts said that payroll checks owed from 2020 have been paid out as of Jan. 22.

Dotts mentioned during a *See 300 on Page 4*

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's chief engineer Eric Poon discusses Imperial Pacific Resort's construction progress before the Commonwealth Casino Commission during CCC board's monthly meeting at the CCC conference room at Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai last Wednesday.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Another stop-work order vs IPI

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Works issued last Dec. 29 a second notice of stop-work order against Imperial Pacific In-

ternational (CNMI) LLC at its Imperial Palace Resort project in Garapan until it submits some documents to DPW building safety officer.

IPI chief engineer Eric Poon disclosed *See ANOTHER on Page 4*



INSIDE



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Mount Carmel School kicks off its celebration of Catholic Schools Week with a proclamation signing.

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Bakeland Saipan traces its humble roots to selling one of the simplest bread of all—pandesal.

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ASIA

With the world still battling the COVID-19 pandemic, Wuhan returns to normal.

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Local

BLENDED LEARNING

What does this mean?

The CNMI Public School System is taking the next step toward reopening campuses. Starting on Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, all Public School System elementary, middle, and high schools will transition into blended learning from remote learning.

Blended learning is the practice of using both in-person and online instruction when teaching students. In a blended-learning course, for example, students will attend a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting, while also independently completing online or paper-based learning packet components of the course outside of the classroom.

In order to maintain appropriate social distancing in every classroom, schools have organized students into cohorts of up to half of the student population. Each cohort will be scheduled to report to school to attend in-person classes twice a week.

With this learning mode, attendance of in-person classes is compulsory.

Schools will be reaching out to parents to inform them of their child's school schedule.

Since students will be reporting to school, safety is of utmost importance. Therefore students who report to school must wear a mask on campus at all times. Hand sanitizing and social distancing will be enforced.

Although these are unprecedented times, school attendance is still compulsory under CNMI law and all students must attend in-person classes when instructed to do so. 3 CMC § 1131 states "Every person between the ages of 5 and 17 shall attend a public school or non-public school or until the completion of the 12th grade or upon meeting the high school graduation requirements. Any parent, guardian, or other person having the responsibility for the care of a child, whose attendance at school is obligatory, shall enroll their child in school." Only students with a medical condition that may impair their ability to attend school in person may apply to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If you have any questions, contact your child(ren)'s school.

Elementary schools schedule

- On-campus (in-person)

class start and end time (Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays/Fridays): 7:30am-1:15am.

■ Remote Learning (Virtual Live) class start and end time (Mondays): 8:30am – 10:30am.

■ Students weekly schedule: students attend classes on campuses twice a week and work on assignments independently on days they are not scheduled on campus. Students will attend classes virtually (Blackboard Ultra) on Mondays in the same way PSS is implementing remote learning; a maximum of up to 15 students are allowed in each classroom, depending on classroom size; some schools may conduct back-to-back classes within the week (Tue/Wednesday and Thurs/Fri on-campus cohort schedules); the schools will notify parents regarding their child/ren's schedule before the beginning of the second semester, and after-school remedial or wellness programs may be available depending on the school offerings from Tuesday through Friday and/or Saturdays.

Middle schools schedule

■ On-campus (in-person) class start and end time (Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays/Fridays):

Chacha Oceanview Middle School, Dandan Middle School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School and Tanapag Middle School are at 8:25am-2:45am.

■ Hopwood Middle School is 8:20am-2:45am.

■ Tinian Jr. Sr. High School is at 7:40am-3:30am.

■ Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School is at 8am -3am.

■ Remote Learning (virtual live) class start and end time (Mondays) is at 8am-to 12am.

■ Students weekly schedule: Students attend classes on campus twice a week and work on assignments independently on days they are not scheduled on campus. Hopwood Middle School has four cohorts and therefore each cohort will attend classes on campus once a week; all students will attend classes virtually on Blackboard Ultra on Mondays; a maximum of up to 15 students are allowed in each classroom, depending on classroom size; some schools may conduct back-to-back classes within the week (Tues/Wed and Thurs/Frid on-campus cohort schedules); the schools will notify parents regarding their child/ren's schedule before the beginning of the second semester.

See **BLENDED** on Page 4

Kilili: Add Marianas to SNAP; Ayuda Act is reintroduced

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has reintroduced his legislation adding the Marianas to the national food assistance program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP. His Ayuda Act was first put forward in 2011 but did not move forward. Sablan was able to get a study of the feasibility of adding the Marianas to SNAP and an extra \$30.5 million for the existing food stamp program, but his ultimate goal was, and remains, having the same safety net protections for people in the Marianas as other Americans, including in Guam.

"The only way to be successful in Congress," Sablan said, "is to be persistent. You cannot give up."

"Timing is always important, too," he added. "In this Congress I was able to get seated on the Agriculture Committee, which will have jurisdiction over my bill. That will make a difference. And the new chairman of the Committee, David Scott, was a co-sponsor of the Ayuda Act back in 2011, so I think I can count on his support."

"We have a Democratic House and Senate now. And we have a vice president, who introduced the Closing the Meal Gap Act in the Senate last year that, among other policies, added the Marianas to SNAP."

"I also think more people understand that the current situation, where the Marianas gets a block grant, a fixed amount, for food assistance

every year just does not work. 'Why does Sablan have to keep coming back and adding money for food aid,' people say, '\$25 million in 2019, \$14 million last month?'"

"Well, the answer is that block grants do not respond to disasters or economic changes. The wisdom of SNAP in the states and in Guam, which is in the program, is when the need increases the money is available automatically. And when the need decreases the federal spending goes down."

"That makes sense for the people who need help. It makes sense from a fiscal point of view for the federal government."

Still hoping governor will act

Sablan said he remains hope-

ful that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres will use the \$14 million Sablan included for Marianas food aid in last month's relief act, Public Law 116-260, to restore benefits to those the governor removed from eligibility in October and return benefits to their previous level.

As soon as the relief act passed in Congress on Dec. 21, Sablan emailed Torres with the good news. "...you requested \$11,527,811," the delegate wrote, "which, to-

gether with the annual block grant of \$12.148 million, would be enough, you said, for all of [fiscal year 2021]."

"Now that I have provided more than you asked for, I respectfully request that you immediately reinstate all the households that you took off NAP on Oct. 1 and

restore the benefits that you cut at that time. For the over 4,000 Marianas households that depend on NAP, your action would be particularly welcome in this holiday season."

To date Torres has not replied to Sablan on how the \$14 million would be used. (PR)

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CNMI COVID-19 VACCINATION UPDATE:

NO VACCINE

LIMITED SUPPLY
PHASE 1

ADDITIONAL SUPPLY
PHASE 2

BROAD SUPPLY
PHASE 3

400

We are able to vaccinate 400 people for dose 1 and dose 2 each day that vaccinations are open.

PHASE 1a

- Healthcare workers, high-risk first responders, homebound/bedbound patients, & Man Amko' (≥65 years)

PHASE 1b EXPANDED TO INCLUDE

- Persons 55 years of age and older
- Workers part of CNMI infrastructure (listed on CISA Sector Graphic) across public and private sectors: Media & Telecommunications, Food & Agriculture, Transportation Systems, Energy and Utilities, Financial Services, Waste & Water Systems, Education (PSS, NMC, Private Schools, Daycares); Faith-Based Leaders, Covid-19 Contractors employed by the CNMI Governor's Task Force, and CNMI (State/Local Government Employees (All agencies)

How to register & get updates

- Visit our website www.vaccinatecnmi.com
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CNMI COVID-19 VACCINATION SCHEDULE

— 01/25/21 - 01/31/21 —

SAIPAN

Monday, 1/25 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 358 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b
- Dose 2: 42 doses for 01/04/2021

Tuesday, 1/26 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 400 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b

Wednesday, 1/27 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 400 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b

Thursday, 1/28 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 400 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b

Friday, 1/29 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 400 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b

Saturday, 1/30 TIME: 8am to 3pm

- Dose 1: 400 doses available for Phase 1a & 1b

TINIAN

Residents on Tinian from Phase 1a were vaccinated on January 17, 2021 with dose 1 of 2. A new vaccination schedule for Tinian is coming soon.

ROTA

Residents on Rota from Phase 1a were vaccinated on January 24, 2021 with dose 1 of 2. A new vaccination schedule for Rota is coming soon.

Phase 1b dose 1 vaccination depends upon verification of employment status by CHCC and daily capacity.

Please bring your valid Government Issued ID and Employee ID to your appointment date.

LOCATION: CHCC - MCATS tents located across from the Emergency Room.

PARKING: Parking lot is located across the CHCC campus on Navy Hill Road.

STIMULUS

From Page 1

mated Clearing House.

According to Finance's website, the CNMI stimulus portal will be open until March 20, 2021.

"You do not need to register to receive a paper check," Finance said.

All eligible CNMI residents, including SSA/RRB/VA/SSI beneficiaries and taxpayers with no filing requirement, who have filed a 2019 tax return with the CNMI Division of Revenue and Taxation can now apply online for direct deposit at stimulus.dof.gov.mp.

The Division of Revenue and Taxation is still accepting 2019 tax filings, including those with a non-filing requirement.

"We want to get these checks out to our people as soon as possible, and the fastest way to do that is to apply for direct deposit. Our residents are advised to provide information from their 2019 tax return forms, as well as their bank routing number and account number. Finance has ensured that the portal is secure and information will be

protected," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in a statement.

Upon entering the web portal, residents will need the following items:

- A copy of your 2019 Tax return
- Your banking information

"The web portal is only to opt-in to get stimulus by direct deposit. If taxpayers have already registered for direct deposit on the first stimulus checks, they do not need to register again," said Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig. "This web portal is for those that got a paper check last time and would like to opt-in for direct deposit for this second stimulus and future stimulus payments. If taxpayers do not opt-in for direct deposit, we will mail paper checks by next Friday."

Atalig emphasized that the web portal is secure and financial information will be protected. "The Department of Finance assures the CNMI that all information through the web portal will be secured and confidential. Let's work together to get everyone the assistance they deserve."

Residents who do not opt for direct deposit will have their stimulus

checks mailed to the address indicated on their return or their last known address.

If taxpayers have any questions or concerns, they may send an email to info@dof.gov.mp and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

"We appreciate the community's patience as Finance begins the expeditious release of this next round of stimulus payments for our community," said Torres. "Our goal is to get these payments out as soon as possible without delays..."

At a radio news briefing Friday, Torres said they are excited to see that second stimulus money rolling into the economy and to the community.

At the same radio briefing, Atalig thanked all taxpayers for their patience as the CNMI finally received approval for the second stimulus implementation plan. "We're very excited that that was done," Atalig said.

He said that Finance plans to roll out all the second stimulus checks out—barring any technical issues—by the end of this week.

At the same radio briefing, Divi-

sion of Revenue and Taxation director Tracy Norita said every eligible individual will get \$600, plus each qualifying child.

"The qualification for the child is the same as the child tax credit. And so we use that same requirement," Norita said.

The director said there is no cap for the number of qualifying children. "The only cap that we have are the income threshold that determine your total amount of your

stimulus," Norita said.

Torres announced last Wednesday that the CNMI 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit and Second Economic Impact Payments Plan for \$41.3 million has been approved by the U.S. Department of Treasury.

The Division of Revenue and Taxation expects to process nearly 31,000 Second Economic Impact Payments. Eligibility and payment amount will be determined based on the 2019 tax returns.

PSS

From Page 1

in-person classes is compulsory.

"In order to maintain appropriate social distancing in every classroom, schools have organized students into cohorts of up to half of the student population. Each cohort will be scheduled to report to school to attend in-person classes twice a week," said a PSS statement.

All students attending in-person classes must have a mask on campus at all times. "Since students will be reporting to school, safety is of ut-

most important, and practicing hand sanitizing and social distancing will be enforced," said PSS.

Schools will be reaching out to parents to inform them of their child's school schedule.

Ada assures the community that all schools will ensure daily sanitizing of all classrooms and facilities, will enforce social distancing indoors and outdoors, temperature checks will be conducted and documented, face masks or face shields will be required at all times for students, staff and visitors, and classrooms will be retrofitted to meet safety measures.

300

From Page 1

court hearing last week that a little over 300 individuals remain employed with IPI who have not been paid their last five payrolls.

The disbursed checks covered payrolls 21 to 26 and there were no notable or major problems, he said.

Dotts said there were some issues for some workers regarding pay periods 21 to 23 but IPI is trying to resolve those issues.

He added that records of all hours worked have been provided to a Department of Labor field agent.

In a separate stipulation, Dotts said IPI and the U.S. Department

of Labor have agreed to include IPI food and beverage employees in the group of IPI workers who are exempted from the court's stop work order.

Dotts said food and beverage employees are essential to the health and wellbeing of employees housed in IPI workers' housing.

He stated that IPI has about 10 food and beverage staff who cook and provide food services to about 200 construction workers.

Saipan Tribune learned from a credible source that power and water has yet to be restored to IPI employee housing despite promises made by IPI chair Cui Jie Li in court last week that power and water would be restored by Friday.

The source added they did re-

ceive checks from IPI but he has yet to cash his check. He said that, based on his previous experience with IPI checks, the checks could still bounce, and most stores still do not accept IPI checks for fear that banks are not accepting them.

According to court documents, the court's stop-work order remains in effect until court sanctions are satisfied, including payroll for IPI's current workers are met and workers' housing are restored to habitable conditions.

Last week, IPI was expecting over \$2 million from IPI's holding company in Hong Kong to cover the six pay periods, Oct. 9, 2020 to Dec. 18, 2020. It was earlier explained that payroll money for IPI was being sent back since it was coming from China and failed to comply with Anti-Money Laundering rules.



Dotts

ANOTHER

From Page 1

DPW's second stop-work order during the Commonwealth Casino Commission board's monthly meeting at the CCC conference room at Springs Plaza in Rualo Rai last Wednesday.

Poon said this second DPW stop-work order is a little bit different from the first order, which completely shut down the entire jobsite.

Poon said the latest order suspends all work on Level 14 of the hotel's tower project until shop drawings and revised plans are submitted to and approved by DPW's Building Safety officer.

Poon said the second order also suspends all electrical, mechanical, and structural works until special inspectors are on board and approved by DPW's Building Safety officer. He said they are working with a third-party company from Guam on this item. Poon said they, however, have yet to execute a contract agreement with the Guam company. As soon as they have new infor-

mation, Poon said they will share that to CCC.

He said DPW's second order, however, allowed IPI to work on landscaping and installation partitions, provided that IPI follow the drawings submitted and approved by DPW's Building Safety officer.

"So basically right now, the workers are following the drawings approved by DPW. And that's the item that we are allowed to work," Poon said.

CCC Division of Enforcement & Investigations manager Vicente B. Babauta told Poon that DPW's stop-work order was issued on Dec. 29 and that IPI has been given 15 days to resolve the issues.

Poon explained that they already submitted the package to DPW and that they are just waiting for DPW to review it. He said they have been talking with DPW if there is any additional information that they need to provide them.

Babauta stated that Jan. 15, 2021, was the last day for IPI to correct some issues and that, as of that morning last Wednesday, they verified

with DPW's Building Safety Code Division representative/inspector Gani Salazar, who is in charge of the issuance of the stop-work order, that DPW might issue a complete shutdown of construction that same day, Wednesday. Poon replied that he's not aware of that.

IPI received the first stop-work order from DPW last Oct. 27.

In the stop-work order, DPW suspended all construction work from the tower hotel's Level 3 to Sky Level 14 until shop drawings and revised plans are submitted to and approved by DPW's Building Safety officer.

DPW also suspended all welding work until special inspectors are on board and approved by the Building Safety officers.

Last Nov. 25, DPW allowed IPI to resume construction work at tower hotel's levels 3 to 13 after IPI has complied with DPW's Building Safety Code Division's requirement.

Salazar, however, stated then that IPI cannot work on tower hotel's Level 14 unless they submit to them shop drawings and revised plan for that floor.

BLENDED

From Page 2

mester, and after-school remedial or wellness programs may be available depending on the school offerings from Tuesday through Friday and/or Saturdays.

High schools schedule

■ Remote Learning (virtual live) class start and end time (Mondays): Kagman High School, Marianas High School, and Saipan Southern High School are at 8:30am-10:55am.

■ Da'ok Academy is at 8:25am-2:15am.

■ On-Campus (in-person) class start and end time (Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays/Fridays):

■ Kagman High School, Marianas High School, and Saipan Southern High School are at 8:30am-2pm.

■ Da'ok Academy is at 8:25am-3am.

■ Tinian Jr. Sr. High School is at 7:30am-3:25pm.

■ Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School is at 7:30am-3:25am.

■ Student Weekly Schedule: students attend classes on campus twice a week and work on assignments independently on days they are not scheduled on campus. All students will attend classes virtually on BBU on Mondays, and the schools will notify parents regarding their child(ren)'s schedule before the beginning of the second semester.

Information for all schools

Time will be afforded to students and parents through scheduled meetings with the teacher on Mondays after the virtual live classes. Parents and students will need to make arrangements to meet with the teacher for those who are in need of guidance with assignments.

Students and parents may reach out to the teachers for inquiries throughout the week.

Meetings may be arranged ei-

ther virtually, in-person or through phone conferencing.

Student meals for all schools

Note that each public school student is eligible for only one meal set per day.

Breakfast and lunch meals will be served on campus to students scheduled on site.

Students who are not scheduled on campus may pick up meals from the "Grab-n-Go" sites and must have their school ID for meals served.

Parents are not allowed to pick up meals at Grab and Go sites on the same days their children are attending classes.

Bus schedule

Parents must be present at the bus stop for the student pick-up in the event that a student's temperature is measured at higher than 100°F or 38°C. Students with an elevated temperature must be taken home.

Students must wear a mask while on the school bus at all times.

Parents should contact their child's school to inform them that their child must remain home due to elevated temperatures.

Student attendance

Student attendance will be recorded for the in-person and asynchronous (independent learning) days. Asynchronous attendance will be recorded based on the submission of completed tasks/assignments assigned on days students are off-campus. It is imperative that students use their off-campus days to complete assignments given as it will determine their daily attendance.

More information

A more complete and detailed information are available on the PSS Facebook page and website, www.cnmipss.org. This Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021, the official *Students First* newsletter will publish complete information, including cohorts schedules on blended learning. (PSS)

MCS celebrates Catholic Schools Week



NEIL FAMA

Mount Carmel School celebrates its annual Catholic Schools Week with a proclamation signing by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Susupe last Jan. 22.

By JUSTINE NAUTA

justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mount Carmel School kicked off its annual celebration of Catholic Schools Week with a proclamation signing at the Mount Carmel Cathedral in Susupe last Jan. 22, with the theme “Faith, Excellence, Service.”

MCS president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero said the theme is fitting because “that’s what Catholic schools are all about: our faith in God, our pursuit of excellence, and our commitment to serving our community and serving our world.”

In a later interview, Deleon Guerrero cited two reasons why they still pushed through with the celebration. “As a Catholic school we have to remember that we’re part of a broader community. Catholic Schools Week is actually

a national celebration in the United States that is led by the National Catholic Educational Association, and includes all Catholic schools in all the states and territories, and Mount Carmel has been celebrating this since the 1990s, and it’s just a great way to join in solidarity with other Catholic schools,” said Deleon Guerrero. “We’re celebrating Catholic Schools Week, this particular year, is that we’ve been through so many challenges—we’re going through this pandemic, we’ve been through economic turbulence and, not long before that, we’ve been through two major typhoons, and yet Catholic schools are still here.”

According to Deleon Guerrero, since Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has been governor, he has been the only governor to

go to the cathedral and sign the proclamation.

“Most proclamations... were signed either at the Multi-Purpose Center or the [Office of the] Governor’s conference room, but when Gov. Torres became governor for the first time we asked him [to sign it on campus] and every year he’s graciously agreed to do that, and it means a lot because it means that we can have more students more faculty present for such an important occasion.”

MCS and the Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center have been hosting the celebration every year.

Usually, MCS would celebrate with in-person activities throughout this week. This year, MCS will still have activities but virtually.

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Email: cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net



Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 8am** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (12/16/2020)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
- VII. Director's Report
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
 - A. Governor's Office
 - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
 - A. New Application
 - P.Biukoto (Mental Health Counselor)
 - B. Renewal Applications
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- XV. Announcements
 - A. Next Meeting Date
 - B. Adjournment of Meeting



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES (RAES) CUC-RAES-21-008

CONSULTANT FOR INTEGRATED RESOURCE AND OTHER UTILITY PLANNING & OTHER SERVICES

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for a Consultant (Project Engineer) from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for Professional Services for the development of studies and the ultimate expansion of Power Plant #1 and Design, Build and Construction of a New Power Plant in Lower Base on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Proposers for this RAES must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Scope of Work (SOW) of the RAES may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one RAES package set.

One (1) Non-Priced Proposal & One (1) Priced Proposal marked “CUC-RAES-21-008, CONSULTANT FOR INTEGRATED RESOURCE AND OTHER UTILITY PLANNING & OTHER SERVICES” must be submitted via email to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior, Purchasing Technician via email address marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 11, 2021**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

The selection of an A&E firm for the award of a contract will be by a committee appointed by the CUC Executive Director for this purpose, which will evaluate responses to this solicitation. Selection shall be made in accordance with CUC Procurement Regulations §50-50-305 regarding Architectural and Engineering Services. Discussions shall be conducted with at least 3 of the responding firms (or less if fewer than five firms respond) regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made therefrom. Based on the scoring criteria outlined herein, only the three most highly qualified firms shall be invited to discuss further the firm's qualifications and project approach outlined in the scope of work.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project will be entertained only for pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 22, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES CUC-RAES-21-013

A&E Design Services for the Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement (S19-068)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Lower Miha Homestead Sewerline Replacement in Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-RAES-21-013, A&E Design Services for Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement”, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 12, 2021**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Dennis Formalejo, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email dennis.formalejo@cucgov.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Gas breaches \$4 mark with new 10-cent increase

The upward trend in gas prices continues, with fuel prices in the CNMI breaching the \$4 mark over the weekend.

Mobil Oil Marianas raised its prices first last Friday, increasing the price of its Extra Fuel by 10 cents a gallon.

Shell Marianas followed suit on Saturday.

Gas prices went up 10 cents from \$3.98 for a gallon of Extra fuel to \$4.08 per gallon. Mobil's Supreme fuel also increased by 10 cents from \$4.43 per gallon

to \$4.53 per gallon.

The lowest price of fuel in the CNMI before the government shutdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was \$3.83. Gas is now 25 cents higher than pre-COVID days.

According to a Mobil employee, they are not informed about fuel increases. They tend to follow Guam's prices and are only informed of an increase the night prior.

A 17-year-old motorist said she doesn't think the

price is too bad given that she has seen gas prices reach higher than \$4.

Another motorist, a 54-year-old male, said he remembers when prices were just a few cents. He said, however, minimum wage has significantly

increased since then so he understands.

According to various media outlets, gas increases are happening as people return to work, with COVID-19 protocols gradually loosening. **(Kimberly Bautista)**

DOL: Those on reduced hours 'could be' ineligible for PUA

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

While still awaiting the U.S. Department of Labor advisory, Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente says there is a possibility that individuals who are on reduced work hours will no longer qualify for the second round of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

Benavente told *Saipan Tribune* in a WhatsApp exchange

that it is possible that new guidelines from the United States that exclude individuals working on reduced hours from receiving PUA benefits could apply to the CNMI.

"Yes, there is a possibility [this would apply to the CNMI]. [We hope to receive] clarification from USDOL hopefully by [this] week," she said.

Benavente said she will make sure this is the first ques-

tion they will bring up in their conference call with USDOL this week. "We're in conference call with USDOL [this] week. That's [the] No. 1 question from us. We will keep everyone updated," she said.

Benavente said DOL has already submitted their application for PUA Round 2 to USDOL last week. She added that DOL will release a press release on the details of the application sometime this week.

According to various media outlets, the Guam Department of Labor has confirmed that the new guidelines for PUA and FPUC state that individuals who are on reduced work hours will not qualify for PUA and that PUA is only for those who are terminated from their jobs.

USDOL guidelines issued to the Guam Labor Department states that, for this extension of unemployment assistance, those who are still

out of jobs directly because of COVID-19 are eligible to receive \$345 in PUA and \$300 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation starting from Dec. 27, 2020, through March 13.

Self-employed individuals whose income is still diminished also remain eligible for PUA and FPUC.

However, those on reduced work hours are no longer qual-

ified to receive PUA.

Last week, GDOL released \$20.9 million in PUA and FPUC assistance for the first batch whose claims were cleared up to Jan. 13.

The CNMI DOL closed its PUA portal back in Dec. 26, 2020, and is still waiting for funding to reopen the portal for eligible recipients to file their PUA claims for PUA round two.

Three food outlets sign on as ProaPerks partners

Bubba Gump, Inas' Kitchen, and Isla Shave Ice are the latest companies to sign on as Northern Marianas College ProaPerks partners, joining many other businesses and organizations that provides exclusive discounts and benefits for NMC students, employees, and alumni.

All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now get discounts or free stuff from these companies. At Bubba Gump, get a free Popcorn Shrimp appetizer with a purchase of an entrée (not valid with any other offers, discounts, or promotions.) At Ina's Kitchen, get 5% off on food and beverages. Inas' Kitchen is located on Isa Drive in Sadog Tasi. At Isla Shave Ice, get a free small shave ice for any purchase of \$10 or more.

Bubba Gump, Inas' Kitchen, and Isla Shave Ice join the growing list of ProaPerks partners, which include 153 Restaurant, 360 Restaurant, 4EVER CNMI, Alamo Car Rental, AllStar Sporting Goods, Aqua Connections, Inc., Athlete's Foot, Boarderline, Bolis R US 2, Caravan of Food, Casa Urashima, Chelu



Bubba Gump is now an NMC ProaPerks Partner. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now get a free Popcorn Shrimp appetizer with a purchase of an entrée (not valid with any other offers, discounts, or promotions.)

NMC

Alynez Enterprise, Docomo Pacific, D' Chef's Kitchen, Dollar Days (Garapan), Enterprise Car Rental, Ete Cafe, Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods, Fork and Spoon, Garapan Restaurant Cafe & Grill, Gold's Gym, Grandvrio Resort Saipan, Great Harvest, Boyer Trading Company LLC dba Ginen Saipan, Healing Stones Spa, Highway Express Auto Care Center, Herman's Modern Bakery, Inc./Tan Marikita's Cafe, Hertz Rental Car, Hyatt, Ice Island Coffee & Ice Deserts, Junlyn Salon,



Isla Shave Ice is now a proud NMC ProaPerks Partner. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now get a free small shave ice for any purchase of \$10 or more.

NMC



Inas' Kitchen is now a proud NMC ProaPerks Partner. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive 5% off on food and beverages.

NMC

Kentucky Fried Chicken/Taco Bell, Kevin's Cafe, Kiki's, Latte Build Gym, Loha's Massage, Magbers Snack Bar, Marianas Creation, MMC & Pacific Labs, LLC, Mermaid Restaurant & Milk Tea, Nam Dae Moon, National Car Rental, Natural Nail & Spa, Neni Girl Nails, NMC Bookstore, Ocean Star Restaurant, Pacific Home Appliances, Pena House Boutique, Saipan Computer Services, Salty's, Shirley's Caffee Shop and Restaurant, Summer Snow Cafe & Kids Corner Cafe, Surf Club, The Pacific Supply, The Shack, Tribe Marianas,

and Triple J Motors.

NMC is in the introductory phase of rolling out the ProaPerks to alumni, students, and employees. For more information, visit marianas.edu/proaperks.

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. **(PR)**

Military trainings set

ASAN, Guam—Military units will continue to conduct scheduled exercises in open ocean at the following coordinates: 13° 48'N/144° 41'E and Warning Area 517 until Jan. 28, from 8am to 11:30pm. Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area for the duration of the exercises and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training in Radio Barigada and Dandan-Malojloj from Jan. 25 to Jan. 28, from 9am to 11:55pm. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity during the training.

The U.S. Navy will conduct live fire exercises in open ocean from Jan. 25 to Jan. 28, from 9am to 11:55pm at the following coordinates: 13° 26'N/145° 08'E, 13° 42'N/144° 36'E. Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area for the duration of the event and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training in Agat Bay, Outer Apra Harbor, and Orote Point from Jan. 25 to Jan. 28, from 9am to 11:55pm. Blank ammunition will be used for this training. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they hear or see increased activity.

The U.S. Navy will conduct exercises in open ocean on Jan. 25, from 5pm to 11:55pm at the following coordinates: 13° 30'N/144° 07'E. Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area for the duration of the event and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for ad-

visories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct live fire exercises in Warning Area 517 on Jan. 26, from 8am to noon.

Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area for the duration of the event and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training in Outer Apra Harbor on Jan. 26, from 9am to 4pm. The public is advised to be aware of the event.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct live fire exercises in Warning Area 517 on Jan. 26, from noon to 9pm. Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area for the duration of the event and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training in Outer Apra Harbor on Jan. 26, from 10am to 4pm. The public is advised to be aware of the event.

The U.S. Marine Corps will conduct training in Warning Area 12 and Warning Area 517 on Jan. 27 to Jan. 28, from 10am to noon and from 2pm to 5pm. The public is advised to be aware of the event. The U.S. Air Force will conduct training in Warning Area 13 Jan. 27 from 10:15am to 11:15am. The public is advised to be aware of the event.

The U.S. Air Force will conduct training in Warning Area 13 on Jan. 28, from 11am to 2pm. and from 3-6pm. The public is advised to be aware of the event.

These trainings support readiness and are critical to developing the skills needed to respond to operational missions throughout the region to ensure a stable, free, and open Indo-Pacific. **(PR)**

Non-profit umbrella group MANGO outlines services, sets goals

By JUSTINE NAUTA

justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The umbrella organization for the CNMI's nonprofit organizations, the Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations, introduced itself and its Lemmai-Mei Non-profit Incubator Project to the community last Jan. 21 in an open house at its Springs Plaza headquarters in Gualo Rai.

This comes soon after the alliance, also called MANGO, was awarded a \$682,485 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Native Americans that will be used for MANGO's Lemmai-Mei Nonprofit Incubator Project. The three-year grant period began on Sept. 30, 2020, and will end on Sept. 29, 2023. The project will help 25 nonprofit organizations receive incubator services to improve their sustainability.

According to MANGO training director Arthur De Oro, the ANA grant will allow them to help other nonprofits in the CNMI. This includes guidance on how to register as a nonprofit organization with both the CNMI and federal governments, obtain tax-exempt status, pursue funding opportunities, and give the nonprofit sector a collective voice in the community, and



The Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations executive director Frances M. Sablan, front row, third from left, poses with MANGO chair Maisie B. Tenorio, front row, fourth from left, MANGO board members, MANGO Lemmai-Mei project staff, and attendees at MANGO's open house last Jan. 21 at the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai.
JUSTINE NAUTA

at local, regional, and international forums.

According to De Oro, the six areas they have identified as areas of most urgent needs in the nonprofit community are establishing a nonprofit organization, board training, sustainability, strategic planning, managing a nonprofit organization, and financial management.

"The objectives of the program are to develop a customized nonprofit mentoring and support program, so it doesn't

just end with the training; it's a continuous support throughout the year, finding out what your challenges are and how we can help meet those challenges, and some of the things that, you know, working with you individually as well," said De Oro.

MANGO currently offers eight services: proposal writing, fiscal agent services, volunteer management, accounting services, management of social media and press presence, human resources, orga-

nizational resources that need analysis, policies and procedures development, and more.

As for the Lemmai-Mei project, they have three objectives: first, to develop a customized nonprofit mentoring and support program that will provide comprehensive training and support system for 25 current and developing nonprofit organizations that provide services to the Chamorro and Carolinian commu-

nity; second, build capacity for 25 existing and developing nonprofit organizations to establish long-range goals and a three-to-five-year strategic plans for their organizations; and lastly, provide 25 nonprofit organizations incubator services and improve their rating by at least one level on the MANGO Nonprofit Sustainability Scale.

MANGO's current board members are Maisie B. Teno-

rio as chairperson, Felicidad Ogumuro as vice chairperson, Emma Perez as secretary, Annalee S. Torres as treasurer, and Laurie Peterka as member.

The MANGO Lemmai-Mei Nonprofit Incubator Project staff are Frances M. Sablan, executive director; Emma H. Perez, project controller; Ryan Camacho, project director; De Oro, training director; and Angelika Narvaez, program assistant.

Sewer odor in Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, Garapan

There will be a sewage odor in the Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, and Garapan areas that is expected to continue intermittently throughout the months of February, March, and April, 2021.

According to a Commonwealth Utilities Corp. statement last Thursday, the cause of the sewer odor is due to the reactivation of the aerators in Basin 1 at the Sadog Tasi Treatment Plant and the startup of the digester aerator unit following a draw-down or decanting of excess effluent.



"The temporary clarifier currently running needs to allow additional sludge to build a sludge layer on the bottom of the basin to properly capture and draw the waste sludge from the unit. This process may take up to three months or more depending on the timing of the treatment process changes. As a result, there will be reduced orders and improved effluent quality once it goes operational," the CUC statement added.

CUC is also working on lessening the odor around the Sadog Tasi Treatment Plant to prevent emission of the odor to the neighboring areas. "We will be looking at alternatives

for masking the smell of the treatment process [that] is not hazardous to you, just unpleasant to smell," it added.

For more information, contact the CUC Call Cen-

ter at 664-4282 or monitor CUC's Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)


**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**


INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB21-COTA/FTA-034

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2021 • TIME: 09:30 A.M.

**"PURCHASE OF TEN (10), 2-WAY HANDHOLD,
ONE (1) BASE RADIO, LAND MOBILE &
ACCESSORIES FOR THE COMMONWEALTH
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY AT MS. ALFREDA P. CAMACHO VIA EMAIL ONLY TO alfreda.camacho@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, 04:30 P.M., LOCAL TIME, JANUARY 27, 2021.** ALL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL POTENTIAL BIDDERS. **QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL BE ENTERTAINED.**



THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT; BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALFREDA P. CAMACHO
S/A FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS


Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director


REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-21-015

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
FOR THE
WATER & WASTEWATER
CERTIFIED OPERATOR TRAINING PROGRAM**

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for Professional Services for the Water & Wastewater Certified Operator Training Program for the islands Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project is funded by the US Department of Interior-Office of Insular Affairs.

Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-21-015, Professional Services for the Water & Wastewater Certified Operator Training Program" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 19, 2021.** Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Proposal shall be submitted on the provided Proposal Forms. Proposals will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal under the contract. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Request for Proposals should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the Proposer, awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposals does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director's approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 29, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Vivian Santos, Human Resources Manager via email Vivian.santos@cucgov.org; Francisco Matsunaga, HR Generalist, via email francisco.matsunaga@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Senior Administrative Support Technician via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Opinion

Hafa Adair!

Saipan Tribune

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Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Finally, a president with a COVID-19 plan

If there is a single day that marks the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., it would be Jan. 21, 2020, when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that it had confirmed the first case of the novel coronavirus on American soil.

The following day, President Donald Trump, who was attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, brushed off the threat from the then-unnamed virus with the type of willful carelessness that defined his government's approach to the pandemic that would soon rear its ugly head. "It's one person coming in from China," he told CNBC. "We have it under control. It's going to be just fine."

Needless to say, it wasn't fine. Even then the virus was stealthily spreading throughout the country. Nor did the U.S. have the coronavirus under any sort of control. As turned out, Trump didn't even have a plan for how to get there, leaving it to the states to figure out what to do. Instead, he pinned his and the nation's fortunes on getting COVID-19 vaccines developed quickly, which the administration helped to make happen.

It was not a winning strategy. In the first year of the pandemic, the U.S. led the world in COVID-19 infection and death. "American carnage" indeed: More than 400,000 dead from the virus, countless jobs lost and futures derailed.

But there's hope that the second year of the pandemic will be less deadly and destructive. At long last, we have a president with an actual plan to tap the knowledge and resources of the nation for a comprehensive response the likes of which we could have used long ago. On the anniversary of the nation's first confirmed case, President Joe Biden released a 200-page document outlining a host of steps he plans to take immediately as he seeks to fulfill his promise to guide the nation out of the pandemic and to vaccinate 100 million people in his first 100 days.

There is nothing new or revolutionary in the plan; just sensible, science-based policy. Experts had long advocated for many if not most of the measures, such as expanding and supporting rapid testing, using the Defense Production Act to force manufacturers to gin up more protective gear and other supplies, and mandating face coverings.

Biden also said Thursday that he would require that travelers flying into the U.S. have negative COVID-19 tests and to quarantine upon arrival. Negative test results aren't definitive proof of the absence of infection, but it's better than the total lack of information we have now about travelers' health. It's maddening to think how many people might have been saved from serious illness or death if even half the steps in this plan had been taken last year.

The first order of business, however, is getting a handle on why there isn't more vaccine being shipped to states. The U.S. invested many billions of dollars into developing and pre-purchasing doses even before they were proved to

See COVID-19 on Next Page

WORKING FROM HIS MOTHER'S BASEMENT, INTERNET TROLL KEVIN SLOBKISS HAS MADE IT HIS MISSION TO DESTROY ANYONE WHO HAD WORKED IN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION.



AND BRING THEM TO SOCIAL JUSTICE...

BUT I WAS JUST AN INTERN WORKING IN THE WHITE HOUSE MAILROOM!



SO? IT'S STILL A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY.

KIRK

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Joe Biden gave the speech America needed

Joe Biden gave the speech we needed after the trauma of an insurrectionist attack on the Capitol building before which he stood. With plain language, it was just right for the place and moment. And it drew some sharp lines in calling on American values.

The day was deeply moving, with a beautiful sea of flags stretching across the Washington Mall; the sight of Kamala Harris taking the oath; and the extraordinary poem by Amanda Gorman. Each bit of it felt like a repudiation of the era we've just passed through.

As in many inaugural addresses, there were pledges for unity, progress and action. But never before have these ideas felt more relevant. The context transformed the speech.

All inaugural speeches engage in a dialogue with those that came before. In 1861, Abraham Lincoln put the choice before the country squarely. "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war." Biden updated that idea: "We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal. We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts." Speaking in a city ringed by a division's worth of troops, for the first time since Lincoln's second inaugural, he pledged to defeat "white supremacy, domestic terrorism."

Three things stood out — rhetorical points that will set political priorities.

First, Biden identified the ideal most under attack: democracy. He spoke of the mob that thought it "could use violence to silence the will of the people." He left unsaid that the mob was sent to the Capitol by the now-former president. Biden mentioned "democracy" 11 times in 20 minutes. (Donald Trump, in his inaugural speech, did not mention it once.) "We've learned again that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. And at this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed," Biden said. In another time, this would be obvious, but after the 2020 election and the attempt to overturn it, the idea is profound.

This week, Senate Democrats introduced sweeping voting reform in S.1, joining the House voting reform bill already designated H.R.1.

The second striking thing was Biden's direct focus on race. As he does so often, he cited the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, and described them as often at war with our reality. "I know that the forces that divide us are deep and they are real. But I also know they are not new. Our history has been a constant struggle between the American ideal that we all are created equal, and the harsh ugly reality that racism, nativism, fear, demonization have long torn us apart."

It's not the first time a president spoke about race in an inaugural, of course. Much of Bill Clinton's second inaugural was

By **MICHAEL WALDMAN**
Los Angeles Times

Michael Waldman, president of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law, was director of speechwriting for President Bill Clinton.



principally devoted to the topic. But in the aftermath of the Black Lives Matter protests and the ongoing assault on voting rights, it is politically as well as morally important that Biden adopted that language as his own.

Biden has already spoken about the quest for racial justice as a key administration goal. The nation will have to look to action on criminal justice reform as well as voting rights to give meaning to his rhetoric.

Finally, he spoke about Trump and his movement. Well, not by name. But the point was unmistakable.

"There is a truth and there are lies, lies told for power and for profit," he declared. "Each of us has a duty and responsibility as citizens, as Americans and especially as leaders, who have pledged to honor our Constitution and protect our nation, to defend the truth and defeat the lies."

Of course, such lies were spewed not just by Trump or his crazed followers, but by the majority of the Republicans in Congress, including the House minority leader Kevin McCarthy, who aggressively pushed the lie that Trump won the election.

What was missing? I wish Biden had been more specific about his initial policy goals. He will have to rally the country in clear terms on ending the COVID-19 pandemic and repairing the economy, and overcome what will no doubt be resistance from Republicans in Congress. He was so determined not to focus on Trump that he did not sharply decry the Trump administration's failures on the pandemic or much else.

Many presidents have been more willing to contrast their policies with what came before. Perhaps Biden assumed the catastrophes of Trump's governance are obvious. No doubt he wants to peel off those Republicans who backed Trump but who perhaps have been shaken out of their trance by the insurrection. An era of better feelings may matter more than sharp goals.

Biden's speech, for future generations, may not rank with Kennedy's gloriously inspirational address or the somber eloquence of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first inaugural. But for Americans right now, it was a moment to exhale, an address that stirred faith, and, yes, hope.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Erasing American (National Security) institutional racism in the Marianas

Joe Biden took the helm as the 46th President of the United States last week. He steps into a deeply divided American imperial landscape, with millions out of work, a worsening COVID-19 pandemic, a capitol that was recently assaulted, a democratically controlled U.S. House of Representatives, a tied U.S. Senate and a minority of recalcitrant Republicans and Democrats. Mr. Biden brings to this chaotic environment a much-needed tempered disposition, decades of experience as a lawmaker, eight years as vice president, an exhaustive policy agenda, and the first woman vice president.

One item on the President's to-do policy list is the call for racial reckoning. Institutional racism and all its darkness have constituted America's Achilles heel. Institutional racism has produced cascading effects that have brought about tremendous damage and destruction for citizens across the empire. The President knows that the country needs to put its own house in order and calling out institutional racism as something that needs to be reversed is an act of courage by Mr. Biden.

What it looks like

American institutional racism has been the bridegroom of U.S. national security and military sponsored statecraft behaviors throughout the Marianas Islands chain region for a long time. Institutional racism's face has many hues that include some of the following: Chamorro family land takings; ongoing and ironclad control of the production, inclusion, omission, timing and decision making power to disseminate information; control to unilaterally disrupt, damage, and destroy ancient rare environmental and Chamorro human cultural resource corridors; and, unilateral control of activities that present additional long term dangers of poisoning on and offshore areas and terrestrial subsurface freshwater supplies without full community input.

American institutional racism overflows into other spheres as well such as Congress' unwillingness to formally acknowledge and pay in full the \$1.4-billion bill that is owed the government of Guam for costs incurred and related to the Compact of Free Association. The outcome of institutional racism is this: American lawmakers and military decision-makers have become comfort-

able and adept at making unilateral decisions about the future of the Marianas Islands, accentuating institutional racism in ways that continue to introduce new varietal risks to our total environment without taking into full account our Chamorro families, our collective human health, and our collective long-term concerns. The result has been and continues to be unnecessary and unneeded distrust and mistrust being produced at many levels.

Reversing American national security institutional racism in the Marianas

The above examples provide the catalyst for our people to consider organizing in ways that we may not have seen before, doing new things to make a great leap forward toward extinguishing American institutional racism. If we do nothing, we risk watching our total environment becoming more damaged and poisoned for generations to come. Our families will be well served by moving away from being unabashed. Asking questions on matters of great consequence should be given a second or third look, because the legitimacy of America's ideals and commitments to move toward a more perfect union or arrangement in the Marianas Islands remains elusive.

Moving to reverse American institutional racism is no easy task, but it is attainable. Guam and the CNMI can find common ground amongst the governors, the legislatures, and the two congressional delegates to forge ahead on policy agendas that directly respond to Mr. Biden's invitation. Our people can create for ourselves, a position of greater power that would garner more attention needed to generate the necessary traction to move forward along this path.

Depositing these difficult and dark topics into a collective memory box to be opened decades later isn't in the long-term interest of our families because we deserve not just better, but the best. Our families have paid the price in blood, sweat, land, lives, and tears to protect and defend the American imperial nation. We can no longer remain a complicit and objectified sacrificial Pacific Islander civilization and blue ocean region for U.S. imperial and multilateral machinations for war and its preparation, because ours is much more than what American national security

Rebirth of a Nation

“Rebirth of a Nation,” a slow-moving epic now playing on a news screen near you, is a movie-like reality tale of a shattered nation hopelessly warring with itself—and hopefully healing itself.

It has just reached a stunning, perhaps climactic, twist. It is the sort of real-life reversal that know-it-all reviewers probably would have panned as corny—way too Hollywood.

But they didn't pan it. Because it was precisely the sort of feel-good switcheroo our nation's despairing moviegoers have desperately longed to see.

The key to this shattered nation's hoped-for rebirth turns out to be the somewhat parallel rebirth of its unlikely leading man, who was, himself, a personally shattered leader. He is also probably not exactly your idea of a suave, smooth-talking superhero. He's just your Average Joe. And as this flick's entire global audience already knows, he has endured an unrelenting onslaught of tragedies.

COVID

From Page 8

be effective. But supply has been unreliable, and now California and some other states are reporting shortages. Just what is going on? One of the last acts of now-defunct Operation Warp Speed was to assure Americans this month that vaccine production was reliable. At the same time, the Warp Speed team lied about the existence of national stockpile of vaccines, which makes us wonder whether production of vaccines is truly proceeding apace.

Biden's COVID coordinator, Jeff Zients, laid the chaos at the feet of the last administration. “What we're inheriting from the Trump administration is so much worse than we could have imagined,” he said Wednesday in a call with reporters. Given what we do know, that is not a surprise. But it will be up to Biden's team to fix that, and fast.

(c) 2021 *The Los Angeles Times*

But each time, we have seen Joe Biden grieve but continue on, rising from each personal challenge to play a still grander leadership role and continue to find ways of helping his fellow citizens, professionally and personally. (I have known Joe Biden rather well for some four decades and seen him rise to deal with each personal challenge while still fulfilling his public leadership roles.)

Over the decades, we all could feel those emotional heart tugs that we knew Joe Biden was experiencing. And we all thought about that as we watched this latest soap-operatic turn of his story stream across our news screens on Wednesday, his Inauguration Day.

And this time, even those viewers who were never Joe Biden's political or personal fans found themselves feeling truly hopeful, at last—wanting him to be right and maybe even being willing to follow his leadership. Just this once!

Because everyone knew he was right when, in his inaugural address, he dished some straight talk to the egos of Hate City. He told them it was urgent that they stop hating and try working together. Just this once. To unite our United States of America.

Some of us understood that Biden's rebirth of a nation began, in a sense, as a rebirth of a notion that many of us remember quite well, when it was spoken by another average-American guy, in another troubled time. Joe Biden's words began where Jerry Ford's words left off in 1974. Ford had just been sworn in as president after Richard Nixon resigned to avoid certain impeachment and conviction for his Watergate crimes and cover-up lies.

“I believe that truth is the glue that holds government together,” said Ford. “... That bond, though strained, is unbroken at home and abroad.”

At the Capitol, average-American Joe Biden officially became our 46th president and picked up right where average-American Jerry Ford had left off.

“There is truth and there are lies, lies told for power and for profit,” Biden said. “And each of us has a duty and responsibility ... especially as leaders ... to defend the truth and defeat the lies. ... I give you my word, I will always level with you.”

'RICK'S COLUMN'

By RICK PEREZ

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Rick Perez used to serve in the U.S. military and has work experiences in public policy research and public affairs. He is passionate about national security and geopolitics and runs a newsletter called Guam Affairs at guamaffairs.substack.com. For questions or comments, contact Perez at rickp7839@gmail.com.

institutional racism suggests.

Self-delegitimization: The American national security way in the Marianas

The existing institutionally racist frameworks do not support the long-term interests of the United States, in part because America has and continues to delegitimize itself in the Marianas through its behavior. The Pentagon delegitimizes itself when it takes Pagan against the expressed opposition of the Chamorro people. Joint Region Marianas delegitimizes itself when it holds information close and doesn't openly share more of what it has. The Navy delegitimizes itself when it desecrates rare ancient Chamorro human resource corridors without the prior consent of our families; and the American national security state further delegitimizes itself when it remains unwilling to clean up the total military sponsored environmental mess that it has produced from past and present actions.

Mr. Biden, the second Irish Roman Catholic U.S. president of Atlantic Ocean Islander ancestry in American history, is correct: now is the time for the United States empire to reckon with institutional racism and democratic regression in all its ugliness and self-destructive proclivities.

Anything less is institutionally unjust, racist, and a disgrace to fundamental American democratic ideals.

By MARTIN SCHRAM

Tribune News Service



Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.

President Donald Trump's avalanche of lies—his claims that the 2020 election was rigged and he really won by a “landslide”—incited and enraged his supporters. Trump pushed them to march to the Capitol on Jan. 6 and somehow halt congressional certification of his defeat. Trump's gang smashed and bashed, occupying the Congress, killing and maiming cops. But Congress eventually did its constitutional duty.

Earlier on Inauguration Day, as the world watched the streaming of this day that was the rebirth of our nation, the cameras showed us an aerial view of the White House South Lawn—at just the right moment. As the Marine One helicopter waited silently, we saw two small figures walk toward the chopper and climb inside. The rotors whirled. The chopper rose and headed south.

Donald Trump was on his way to his Mar-a-Lago Elba.






Later, at the capital, the global audience watching this movie as breaking news understood Trump's incitement and Biden's inauguration must be forever linked.

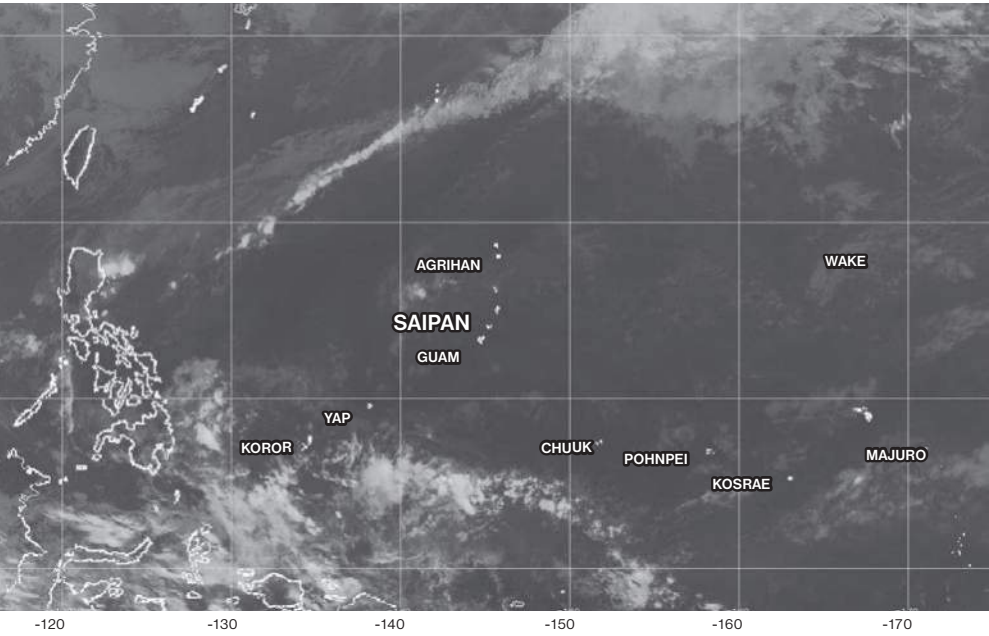
“Here we stand just days after a riotous mob thought they could use violence to silence the will of the people, to stop the work of our democracy, to drive us from this sacred ground,” said Biden. “It did not happen. It will never happen....”

“We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal. We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts.”

The Rebirth of a Nation, an epic-in-progress, streams on.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	77°	86°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 6:50 AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180. Trade winds have dropped to moderate this morning, and skies have cleared over Tinian and Saipan as the old shear line fragment has moved north. Seas at the buoys are around 7 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.


- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20



seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	83° / 78°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	83° / 79°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:13 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:13 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:28 AM	3:00 PM
Tuesday	-	4:22 AM	3:51 PM
Wednesday	-	5:16 AM	4:45 PM
Thursday	-	6:10 AM	5:43 PM
Friday	-	7:02 AM	6:41 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	73° / 68°	
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 21°	
Hong Kong	Showers	70° / 63°	
Honolulu	Windy	80° / 72°	
London	Showers	46° / 36°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	72° / 53°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°	
Melbourne	Sunny	99° / 73°	
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	66° / 58°	
New York	Sunny	39° / 27°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52° / 36°	
Paris	Showers	57° / 46°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°	
Rome	Windy	61° / 37°	
Salem	Sunny	47° / 24°	
San Francisco	Showers	54° / 46°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	39° / 25°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	52° / 37°	
Washington, DC	Sunny	44° / 25°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
6:47 AM	High Tide	1.62	
11:33 AM	Low Tide	1.29	
4:22 PM	High Tide	1.77	
-	-	-	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2020

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 4, 6	UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	3, 5 via Guam
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5	UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	1, 3, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat	1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun	1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat	1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun	1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
GUAM TO ROTA				2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
				2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
				2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
				2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

BAKELAND SAIPAN: Turning talent into profit

By **BEA CABRERA**
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Just like making fantastic bread, Bakeland Saipan head baker Partha Talukder and his wife have all the right ingredients in putting together a business that is run at home. Established in November last year, they had a soft-opening to raise funds to

help victims of Super Typhoon Rolly in the Philippines. Bakeland Saipan is now a household name and its humble beginnings can be traced back from selling one of the simplest bread of all—pandesal or salt bread.

To order from Bakeland Saipan, call (670) 989-2989

“My wife and her family, especially her grandmother Lola Inay are from the Philippines and they are fond of pande-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

All Bakeland Saipan goodies are baked everyday to insure freshness and quality.



Bags of their signature product—ube pandesal.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

sal, a local bread back home. While there are a few bakeries on island who make pandesal, access to it everyday became hard because of the pandemic. Whenever we would go to a store, its either closed or sold out,” Talukder said.

“Because we had a lot of time during quarantine, we started to bake for our own consumption. There were days that we would share them with our friends, mostly Filipinos and they gave us an idea why not turn it into a business. Out of 57,000 residents on the is-

land, 35% are Filipinos and during the pandemic, they are here to stay. So our focus market are local residents and not tourists,” Talukder added.

Talukder said that currently, they do not have many products but whatever they have for sale, was given time to get prepared and the result is quality taste and texture. “Originally, we started with a single product, our signature product which is the ube cheese pandesal. Then, we added two or more products like mocha cream cheese bun, blueberry cream cheese bun, and ensaymada in cheese and

ube flavors.”

“Our shop is based at home, so the freshness and quality of the products are obviously there, because we also bake



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bakeland Saipan is located along Barbara St. in Chalan Kanoa next to Trader's Insurance.

in the comforts of our home. We treat Bakeland Saipan like a family business as every member of the family would add a personal touch—from our Lola Inay down to our cousin Patricia,” he added.

According to Talukder, they bake based on incoming orders, to make sure that there is balance with supply and demand. “This is so because we want our products to be fresh and everything sold out, so nothing gets old or go to waste. Every baked product is fresh out of the oven every day delivered to our customer's doorstep or picked up from our home,” he said.

“We want our customers to buy and consume our products with the assurance of the quality in every bite when they take it home to their family or friends. We want them to feel that for every bread that they and their family eat, has that homemade feel because we live by the mantra ‘happiness is homemade,’” he added.

Bakeland Saipan is located along Barbara Avenue in Chalan Kanoa next to Trader's Insurance. To order from Bakeland Saipan, call (670) 989-2989 or go to their Facebook page: Bakeland Saipan.

Yellen's nomination as treasury secretary advances in Senate

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate Finance Committee approved President Joe Biden's nomination of Janet Yellen to be the nation's 78th treasury secretary on Friday, setting up a final vote that would make her the first woman to hold the job.

The Finance Committee approved her nomination on a 26-0 vote. The administration is urging a quick confirmation vote in the full Senate, saying it's critical to get the top member of Biden's economic team in place as the Democratic president seeks to win approval of a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan.

Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon, the incoming chair of the Finance Committee, said he hoped to get Yellen's nomination approved by the full Senate later Friday, but the vote was not scheduled. It could happen as soon as Monday.

Republicans on the com-

mittee said they had a number of policy disagreements with Yellen and the Biden administration in such areas as raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy but believed it was important to allow Biden to assemble his economic team quickly.

At her confirmation hearing before the Finance Committee on Tuesday, Yellen had argued that without prompt action the nation faced the threat of a “longer, more painful recession.” She urged quick action on the package that would provide an additional \$1,400 in payments to individuals making below \$75,000 annually as well as providing expanded unemployment benefits, further aid for small businesses and support for cities and states to prevent layoffs.

The plan also provides more support for vaccine production and distribution.

During the hearing, Yellen faced substantial pushback

on the plan from Republicans on the committee who argued that the package was too large, especially at a time that the federal budget deficit has soared above \$3 trillion. They also objected to such measures as an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, told Yellen that Biden's plan represented a “laundry list of liberal structural economic reforms.”

As treasury secretary, Yellen, 74, would occupy a pivotal role in shaping and directing Biden's economic policies. She would enter the position after many years serving in other top economic jobs, including becoming the first woman to serve as chair of the Federal Reserve, from 2014 to 2018.

Since leaving the Fed, Yellen has been a distinguished fellow in residence at the Brookings Institution, a liberal Washington think tank.

Biden's choice on econ aid: Deal with GOP or go for it all

WASHINGTON (AP)—Joe Biden's ambitious opening bid, his \$1.9 trillion American Rescue economic package, will test the new president's relationship with Congress and force a crucial choice between his policy vision and a desire for bipartisan unity.

Biden became president this week with the pandemic having already forced Congress to approve \$4 trillion in aid, including \$900 billion just last month. And those efforts have politically exhausted Republican lawmakers, particularly conservatives who are panning the new proposal as an expensive, unworkable liberal wish-list.

Yet, Democrats, now with control of the House, Senate and White House, want the new president to deliver ever more sweeping aid and economic change.

On Friday, Biden took a few beginning steps, signing executive orders at the White

House. But he also declared a need to do much more and quickly, saying that even with decisive action the nation is unlikely to stop the pandemic in the next several months and well over 600,000 could die.

“The bottom line is this: We are in a national emergency. We need to act like we're in a national emergency,” he said. “So we got to move with everything we got. We've got to do it together. I don't believe Democrats or Republicans are going hungry and losing jobs, I believe, Americans are going hungry and losing jobs.”

The limits of what Biden can achieve on his own without Congress was evident in the pair of executive orders he signed Friday. The orders would increase food aid, protect job seekers on unemployment, make it easier to obtain government aid and clear a path for federal workers and contractors to get a \$15 hourly

minimum wage.

Brian Deese, director of the White House National Economic Council, called the orders a “critical lifeline,” rather than a substitute for the larger aid package that he said must be passed quickly.

All of this leaves Biden with a decision that his team has avoided publicly addressing, which is the trade-off ahead for the new president. He can try to appease Republicans, particularly those in the Senate whose votes will be needed for bipartisan passage, by sacrificing some of his agenda. Or, he can try to pass as much of his proposal as possible on a party-line basis.

Well aware of all that, Biden is a seasoned veteran of Capitol Hill deal-making and has assembled a White House staff already working privately with lawmakers and their aides to test the bounds of bipartisanship.

Nation

Democrats start reining in expectations for immigration bill



AP
Senate Majority Leader
Chuck Schumer of N.Y.
takes the elevator in the
U.S. Capitol, Friday, Jan.
22, 2021, in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP)—It's taken only days for Democrats gauging how far President Joe Biden's bold immigration proposal can go in Congress to acknowledge that if anything emerges, it will likely be significantly more modest.

As they brace to tackle a politically flammable issue that's resisted major congressional action since the 1980s, Democrats are using words like "aspirational" to describe Biden's plan and "herculean" to express the effort they'll need to prevail.

A cautious note came from the White House on Friday when press secretary Jen Psaki said the new administration views Biden's plan as a "first step" it hopes will be "the basis" of discussions in Congress. Democrats' measured tones underscore the fragile

road they face on a paramount issue for their minority voters, progressives and activists.

Immigration proponents advocating an all-out fight say Democrats' new hold on the White House and Congress provides a major edge, but they concede they may have to accept less than total victory. Paving a path to citizenship for the estimated 11 million immigrants in the U.S. illegally, the centerpiece of Biden's plan, is "the stake at the summit of the mountain," Frank Sharry, executive director of the pro-immigration group America's Voice, said in an interview. He said proponents may have to accept "stepping stones" along the way.

The citizenship process in Biden's plan would take as little as three years for some people, eight years for others.

It would make it easier for certain workers to stay in the U.S. temporarily or permanently, provide development aid to Central American nations in hopes of reducing immigration and move toward bolstering border screening technology.

No. 2 Senate Democratic leader Richard Durbin of Illinois said in an interview this week that the likeliest package to emerge would start with creating a path to citizenship for so-called Dreamers. They are over 1 million immigrants who've lived in the U.S. most of their lives after being brought here illegally as children.

Over 600,000 of them have temporary permission to live in the U.S. under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. Former President Barack Obama created that

program administratively, and Durbin and others want to protect it by enacting it into law.

Durbin, who called Biden's plan "aspirational," said he'll push for as many other elements as possible, including more visas for agricultural workers and others.

"We understand the political reality of a 50-50 Senate, that any changes in immigration will require cooperation between the parties," said Durbin, who is on track to become Senate Judiciary Committee chairman. He said Senate legislation likely "will not reach the same levels" as Biden's proposal.

The Senate is split evenly between the two parties, with Vice President Kamala Harris tipping the chamber to Democrats with her tie-breaking vote. Even so, passing major

legislation requires 60 votes to overcome filibusters, or endless procedural delays. That means 10 Republicans must join all 50 Democrats to enact an immigration measure, a tall order.

"Passing immigration reform through the Senate, particularly, is a herculean task," said Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., who will also play a lead role in the battle. He said Democrats "will get it done" but the effort will require negotiation.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who's worked with Democrats on past immigration efforts, said "comprehensive immigration is going to be a tough sale" this year.

"I think the space in a 50-50 Senate will be some kind of DACA deal," he said.

Illustrating the bargaining ahead, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, a moderate who's

sought earlier immigration compromises, praised parts of Biden's plan but said she wants changes including more visas for the foreign workers her state's tourism industry uses heavily.

Democrats' hurdles are formidable.

They have razor-thin majorities in a House and Senate where Republican support for easing immigration restrictions is usually scant. Acrid partisan relationships were intensified by former President Donald Trump's clamorous tenure. Biden will have to spend plenty of political capital and time on earlier, higher priority bills battling the pandemic and bolstering the economy, leaving his future clout uncertain.

Democrats also must resolve tactical differences.

Michigan Mega Millions ticket has won \$1.05 billion jackpot

DETROIT (AP)—Someone in Michigan bought the winning ticket for the \$1.05 billion Mega Millions jackpot, which is the third-largest lottery prize in U.S. history.

The winning numbers for Friday night's drawing were 4, 26, 42, 50 and 60, with a Mega Ball of 24. The winning ticket was purchased at a Kroger store in the Detroit suburb of Novi, the Michigan Lottery said.

"Someone in Michigan woke up to life-changing news this morning, and Kroger Michigan congratulates the newest Michigan multimillionaire," said Rachel Hurst, a regional spokeswoman for the grocery chain. She declined to comment further.

The Mega Millions top prize had been growing since Sept. 15, when a winning ticket was sold in Wisconsin. The lottery's next estimated jackpot is \$20 million.

Friday night's drawing came just two days after a ticket sold in Maryland matched all six numbers drawn and won a \$731.1 million Powerball jackpot.

The jackpot figures refer to amounts if a winner opts for an annuity, paid in 30 annual installments. Most winners choose a cash prize, which for the Mega Millions game would be \$776.6 million before taxes and \$557 million after taxes, Michigan Lottery spokesman Jake Harris said.

"No way!" Ryan Gabrielli told The Detroit News after shopping Saturday at the lucky Kroger. "We meant to play the lottery but forgot to."

Harris said the ticket holder should sign the back and keep it in a safe place.

"I wouldn't be surprised if the winning ticket holder held onto that ticket for a little bit, got their affairs in order, put together a financial plan and then reached out to contact us," he said.

Only two lottery prizes in the U.S. have been larger than Friday's jackpot. Three tickets for a \$1.586 billion Powerball jackpot were sold in January 2016, and one winning ticket sold for a \$1.537 billion Mega Millions jackpot in October 2018.

In Grosse Ile, a suburb south of Detroit, 126 people bought more than 600 tickets for the Friday drawing but didn't win the jackpot. They hoped to win enough money to replace a publicly owned bridge on their island in the Detroit River that has been closed indefinitely for major repairs. The only other transportation option for the island's 10,000 residents is a privately owned toll bridge.

"We used this to lift our spirits and dream a little bit," said organizer Kyle de Beausset. "Of course we're open to any help with the bridge, but I can't imagine the winner would want to finance it."

In first days, Biden flashes action as deep problems loom

WASHINGTON (AP)—Inside the White House, President Joe Biden presided over a focused launch of his administration, using his first days in office to break sharply with his predecessor while signing executive orders meant as a showy display of action to address the historic challenges he inherited.

But outside the gates at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., there are signs everywhere that those crises are as deep and intractable as ever. The coronavirus pandemic surges, the economy teeters and Republicans in Congress have signaled objections to many of Biden's plans.

Biden is looking to jump-start his first 100 days in office with action and symbolism to reassure a divided and weary public that help is in the off-

ing. He also knows that what a president can do on his own is limited so he is calling for Congress to act while he is being candid with Americans that dark days are ahead.

"The crisis is not getting better. It's deepening," Biden said Friday about the impact of pandemic. "A lot of America is hurting. The virus is surging. Families are going hungry. People are at risk of being evicted again. Job losses are mounting. We need to act." "The bottom line is this: We're in a national emergency. We need to act like we're in a national emergency," he said.

Biden's first moments as president were meant to steady American democracy itself.

He took the oath just before noon Wednesday in front of a Capitol that still

bore scars from the insurrection that took place precisely two weeks earlier and was aimed at stopping Biden's ascension to power. The violence underscored the fragile nature of the peaceful transfer of power and led to the historic second impeachment of Donald Trump.

Biden resisted calls to move the inauguration to a more secure indoor setting. He was intent on preserving the usual inauguration trappings as a signal that normalcy could be achieved even though there were signs everywhere that things were far from normal: a military presence that resembled a war zone, guests on the dais wearing masks, a National Mall filled with 200,000 American flags standing in for the American people who were asked to stay away be-

cause of the pandemic.

Biden was plain-spoken and direct about the confluence of crises the nation faces. More than 410,000 Americans have lost their lives to the pandemic, millions are out of work and the aftershocks of a summer reckoning with racial justice are still felt.

"You can hear this collective sigh of relief that Trump is gone, but we have no time for a sigh of relief because of the cascading crises," said Eddie Glaude Jr., chair of the department of African American studies at Princeton University. "We don't want to assume that the election of Biden solves everything. The scale of the problems is immense and the question for us is do we respond at scale."

The changes within the White House have been swift.

Asia

AS WORLD STILL BATTLING PANDEMIC

Wuhan returns to normal

WUHAN, China (AP)—A year ago, a notice sent to smartphones in Wuhan at 2 a.m. announced the world's first coronavirus lockdown, bringing the bustling central Chinese industrial and transport center to a virtual standstill almost overnight. It would last 76 days.

Early Saturday morning, however, residents of the city where the virus was first detected were jogging and practicing tai chi in a fog-shrouded park beside the mighty Yangtze River.

Life has largely returned to normal in the city of 11 million, even as the rest of the world grapples with the spread of the virus' more contagious variants. Efforts to vaccinate people for COVID-19 have been frustrated by disarray and limited supplies in some places. The scourge has killed more than 2 million people worldwide.

Traffic was light in Wuhan but there was no sign of the barriers that a year ago isolated neighborhoods, prevented movement around the city and confined people to their housing compounds and even apartments.

Wuhan accounted for the bulk of China's 4,635 deaths from COVID-19, a number



Residents practice tai chi at a park in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province on Saturday, Jan. 23, 2021.

that has largely stayed static for months. The city has been largely free of further outbreaks since the lockdown was lifted on April 8, but questions persist as to where the virus originated and whether Wuhan and Chinese authorities acted fast enough and with sufficient transparency to allow the world to prepare for a pandemic that has sickened more than 98 million.

Wuhan has been praised for its sacrifice in the service of the nation, turning it into a sort of Stalingrad in China's war against the virus, commemorated in books, documentaries, TV shows and florid panegyrics from officials including head of state

and leader of the Communist Party Xi Jinping.

"We think Wuhan is a heroic city. After all, it stopped its economy to help China deal with the pandemic. This is a noble act," said resident Chen Jiali, 24, who works at an internet shopping company.

China on Saturday announced another 107 cases, bringing its total since the start of the pandemic to 88,911. Of those, the northern province of Heilongjiang accounted for the largest number at 56. Beijing and the eastern financial hub of Shanghai both reported three new cases amid mass testing and lockdowns of hospitals and housing units linked to recent outbreaks.

was an invited guest at Biden's inauguration.

And in a final swipe at China, the Trump administration's outgoing U.N. ambassador tweeted that it's time for the world to oppose China's efforts to exclude and isolate Taiwan, drawing sharp criticism from Beijing.

Ambassador Kelly Craft accompanied the tweet with a photo of herself in the U.N. General Assembly Hall where the island is banned. She carried a handbag with a stuffed Taiwan bear sticking out of the top, a gift from Taiwan's representative in New York, Ambassador James Lee.

Taiwan and China separated amid civil war in 1949 and China says it is determined to bring the island under its control by force if necessary. The U.S. switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979, but is legally required to ensure Taiwan can defend itself and the self-governing democratic island enjoys strong bipartisan support in Washington.

said China on Saturday sent eight bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons and four fighter jets into airspace just southwest of the island, part of a long-standing pattern of Chinese incursions aimed at pressuring the government of President Tsai Ing-wen into caving to Beijing's demand that she recognize Taiwan as a part of Chinese territory.

The latest Chinese overflight came on the heels of President Joe Biden's inauguration, emphasizing the island's enduring position in the panoply of divisive issues between the sides that also include human rights, trade disputes and, most recently, questions about China's initial response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Biden's administration has shown little sign of reducing pressure on China over such issues, although it is seen as favoring a return to more civil dialogue. In another sign of support for Taiwan, the island's de-facto ambassador to Washington, Hsiao Bi-khim,

US reaffirms Taiwan support after China sends warplanes

BEIJING (AP)—The U.S. has reaffirmed support for Taiwan following China's dispatch of warplanes near the island in an apparent attempt to intimidate its democratic government and test American resolve.

The State Department on Saturday said it "notes with concern the pattern of ongoing (China's) attempts to intimidate its neighbors, including Taiwan."

"We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure against Taiwan and instead engage in meaningful dialogue with Taiwan's democratically elected representatives," spokesperson Ned Price said in the statement.

Washington will continue to deepen ties with Taiwan and ensure its defense from Chinese threats, while supporting a peaceful resolution of issues between the sides, the statement said.

There was no immediate Chinese response Sunday.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry

World

Rally demanding Navalny release leads to 3K arrests

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian police arrested more than 3,000 people Saturday in nationwide protests demanding the release of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, the Kremlin's most prominent foe, according to a group that counts political detentions.

The protests in scores of cities in temperatures as low as minus-50 C (minus-58 F) highlighted how Navalny has built influence far beyond the political and cultural centers of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In Moscow, an estimated 15,000 demonstrators gathered in and around Pushkin Square in the city center, where clashes with police broke out and demonstrators were roughly dragged off by helmeted riot officers to police buses and detention trucks. Some were beaten with batons.

Navalny's wife Yulia was among those arrested.

Police eventually pushed demonstrators out of the square. Thousands then regrouped along a wide boulevard about a kilometer (half-mile) away, many of them throwing snowballs at the police before dispersing.

Opposition leader urges UN to halt Belarus media crackdown

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The main opposition challenger in Belarus' disputed presidential election urged the United Nations on Friday to call for a halt to "violence and lawlessness" in the country, including media censorship, internet shutdowns, website blockages and cancellation of accreditation for journalists.

Former presidential candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya told an informal meeting of the U.N. Security Council that since September the situation in her nation "has only worsened" and the media remain under assault from President Alexander Lukashenko's regime.

Mass protests have gripped Belarus, a former Soviet nation of 9.5 million people, since official results from the Aug. 9 presidential election gave Lukashenko a landslide victory over Tsikhanouskaya. She and her supporters refused to recognize the result, saying the vote was riddled with fraud.

Authorities have cracked down on the largely peaceful demonstrations, the big-

gest of which went to protest near the jail where Navalny is held. Police made an undetermined number of arrests there.

The protests stretched across Russia's vast territory, from the island city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk north of Japan and the eastern Siberian city of Yakutsk, where temperatures plunged to minus-50 Celsius, to Russia's more populous European cities. Navalny and his anti-corruption campaign have built an extensive network of support despite official government repression and being routinely ignored by state media.

"The situation is getting worse and worse, it's total lawlessness," said Andrei Gorkyov, a protester in Moscow. "And if we stay silent, it will go on forever."

The OVD-Info group, which monitors political arrests, said at least 1,167 people were detained in Moscow and more than 460 at another large demonstration in St. Petersburg.

Overall, it said 3,068 people had been arrested in some 90 cities, revising the count downward from its

earlier report of 3,445. The group did not give an explanation for its revision. Russian police did not provide arrest figures.

Undeterred, Navalny's supporters called for protests again next weekend.

Navalny was arrested on Jan. 17 when he returned to Moscow from Germany, where he had spent five months recovering from a severe nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin and which Russian authorities deny. Authorities say his stay in Germany violated terms of a suspended sentence in a 2014 criminal conviction, while Navalny says the conviction was for made-up charges.

The 44-year-old activist is well known nationally for his reports on the corruption that has flourished under President Vladimir Putin's government.

His wide support puts the Kremlin in a strategic bind—officials are apparently unwilling to back down by letting him go free, but keeping him in custody risks more protests and criticism from the West.

testing every day," Tsikhanouskaya said. "This demonstrates courage, dignity and resilience."

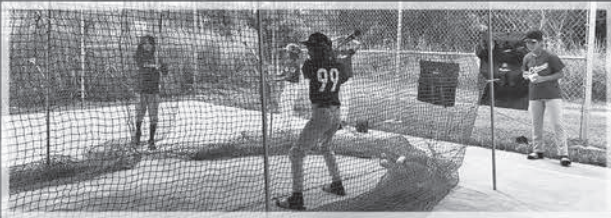
Among journalists under arrest are four members of the Belarus Press Club, including its founder, Yuliya Slutskaia; Ihar Losik, administrator of the most popular social media channel in the country who has been on hunger strike for over a month; and three female journalists imprisoned on charges of organizing mass protests and disclosing information about a protester, Roman Bandarenka, who was "killed by the regime's cronies," Tsikhanouskaya said.

She said her husband, prominent video blogger Siarhei Tsikhanouski, "is charged with organizing mass protests but his guilt is telling the truth and running for president." She said she and their two children haven't seen him for almost eight months.

Tsikhanouskaya became a presidential candidate after her husband's arrest on May 29, and she fled to neighboring Lithuania after the election in fear of repercussions.

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Life & Style

Larry King, broadcasting giant for half-century, dies at 87

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Larry King, the suspenders-sporting everyman whose broadcast interviews with world leaders, movie stars and ordinary Joes helped define American conversation for a half-century, died Saturday. He was 87.

King died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, his production company, Ora Media, tweeted. No cause of death was given, but a spokesperson said Jan. 4 that King had COVID-19, received supplemental oxygen and been moved out of intensive care.

A longtime nationally syndicated radio host, he also was a nightly fixture on CNN from 1985 through 2010 as the host of "Larry King Live." He won many honors, including two Peabody awards, during the show's 25-year run.

King set himself apart with the curiosity he brought to every interview, whether questioning the assault victim known as the Central Park

jogger or billionaire industrialist Ross Perot, who in 1992 announced his presidential candidacy on King's show.

King conducted an estimated 50,000 on-air interviews. In 1995, he presided over a Middle East peace summit with Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat, King Hussein of Jordan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. He welcomed everyone from the Dalai Lama to Elizabeth Taylor, from Mikhail Gorbachev to Barack Obama, Bill Gates to Lady Gaga.

Especially after he relocated to Los Angeles from Washington, "Larry King Live" frequently ended up in the thick of breaking celebrity news. The show featured Michael Jackson's friends and family members talking about the singer's death in 2009.

"I don't pretend to know it all," King said in a 1995 Associated Press interview. "Not, 'What about Geneva or

Cuba?' I ask, 'Mr. President, what don't you like about this job?' Or 'What's the biggest mistake you made?' That's fascinating."

He was known for getting guests who were notoriously elusive. Frank Sinatra, an old friend, spoke to King in 1988 in what would be the crooner's last major TV appearance. King had never met Marlon Brando when the actor asked to appear on his show in 1994.

After a gala week marking his 25th anniversary in 2010, he abruptly announced he was retiring from CNN, telling viewers, "It's time to hang up my nightly suspenders."

Once the leader in cable TV news, King ranked third in his time slot with less than half the nightly audience than during his peak year, 1998, when "Larry King Live" drew 1.64 million viewers. His approach to interviewing by then felt dated in an era of edgy questioning by other hosts.

He found a new sort of celebrity on Twitter, attracting over more than 2 million fol-

lowers who mocked and loved him for his esoteric style.

"I've never been in a canoe.

#Itsmys2cents," he said in a typical tweet in 2015.

King was born Lawrence

Harvey Zeiger in 1933, a son of Jewish immigrants who ran a bar and grill in Brooklyn.



King

Italian police find stolen copy of Leonardo 'Salvator Mundi'

ROME (AP)—Italian police have recovered a 500-year-old copy of Leonardo da Vinci's 16th century "Salvator Mundi" painting of Jesus Christ that was stolen from a Naples church during the pandemic without the priests even realizing it was gone.

The discovery was made when Naples police working on a bigger operation found the painting hidden in an apartment. Police chief Alfredo Fabbrocini said the apartment owner was detained after he offered a "less than credible" explanation that he had "casually" bought it at a market.

The painting is a copy of the "Salvator Mundi" (Savior of the World) by Leonardo that sold

for a record \$450 million at a Christie's auction in 2017. The unnamed bidder was later identified as a Saudi royal who purportedly purchased it on behalf of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. It was supposed to have been unveiled a year later at the museum, but the exhibition was delayed indefinitely and the work hasn't been seen in public since.

The copy, attributed to the Leonardo school but not the Renaissance artist himself, had been housed in a small museum in a side chapel of the Basilica of San Domenico Maggiore in Naples, which had been closed during the coronavirus pandemic.

Fabbrocini said the discovery was particularly satisfying

"because we resolved a case before it was created." He explained: "The painting was found but its custodian hadn't realized it was stolen."

The painting depicts a robed Jesus holding a crystal orb and gazing directly at the viewer. The San Domenico basilica says the painting was probably made by a Leonardo student in the 1520s and purchased by Giovan Antonio Muscettola, an adviser to Emperor Charles V and ambassador to the papal court. It was housed in the basilica's Muscettola family chapel.

It was restored prior to being exhibited in a 1983-1984 show "Leonardo and Leonardo in Naples and Rome."



Italian police officers stand by a copy of the "Salvator Mundi" (Savior of the World) by Leonardo da Vinci, in Naples, Italy, Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021.

AP

Bond film 'No Time to Die' delayed again because of virus

LONDON (AP)—It's still not time for "No Time to Die."

Producers of the forthcoming James Bond thriller say the film's release has been delayed again, until the fall of 2021, because of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

The official 007 Twitter account said late Thursday that the 25th installment in the franchise will now open on Oct. 8.

"No Time To Die" was originally slated to open in April 2020 but was pushed back to November of that year as the

virus swept around the world. It was then delayed again to April 2, 2021.

The film from director Cary Joji Fukunaga stars Daniel Craig as 007, Rami Malek, Lashana Lynch and Ana de Armas.

It's one of a slew of major releases to be pushed back or moved to streaming services as Hollywood studios grapple with coronavirus-related restrictions that have shuttered cinemas in markets around the world.

While mass-vaccination

programs in many countries give hope that theaters can reopen, progress on immunization is slow.

After the latest Bond delay was announced, Sony said it was pushing back several of its scheduled spring releases. It said "Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway" was moving from April to June, "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" was delayed from June to November and "Cinderella," starring singer Camila Cabello, will now arrive in July rather than February.

Mom can't reconcile son's remarriage after his affair

DEAR ABBY: My son had a yearlong affair with his wife's best friend, which started when the two families took vacations together. My husband and I have always been close to our daughter-in-law and our grandchildren, ages 6 and 10, as well as our son. The divorces are final now, and the lovers are married.

Abby, we can't stand the new wife. We abhor the deceit, the betrayal and the pain she and our son have caused. Now he is demanding that we accept her. We don't want to abandon our daughter-in-law, and I can't bear the thought of her and our grandchildren's inheritance going to the new wife. Also, I am so furious with my son for this selfish, egregious act I don't even like seeing him. I don't know what to do. Any advice?

MOTHER OF A CHEATER

DEAR MOTHER: Depending upon the child custody arrangement between your son and his ex-wife, you may not have to spend much time with the happy newlyweds. Because you love your former daughter-in-law, see her as often as you wish and include her in celebrations. Refrain from acting out in anger. Be polite to your son's new wife. Say nothing you might later regret. You do not have to love—or even like—the woman.

As to what happens to your estate in the event of your and

your husband's death, this is a discussion you should have with your lawyer. You are under no obligation to reward your son and the new Mrs., especially if you prefer to arrange for your grandchildren and the daughter-in-law you loved to have those assets.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: After living with my husband's gradual hearing loss for several years and his refusal to get hearing aids, I finally asked him to get them as a birthday gift to me. He agreed, and I expected that he would wear them once he got them. When he does, it greatly improves his hearing. Instances of my having to repeat myself diminish noticeably. But he seldom wears them when he's at home with me.

I mentioned to him several times how important it was to me, then gave up. I managed to deal with it until the pandemic forced us to stay home so much of the time. I brought it up again recently, referencing the stay-at-home order and how much I would appreciate his wearing them, but he still wears them only occasionally.

I feel disrespected because he isn't willing to do this small thing to make both our lives easier during this period of confinement. How do you suggest I explain this to him so he "hears" me?

STILL FRUSTRATED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR STILL FRUSTRATED: This may not be a matter of your husband "tuning you out." Have you asked him WHY he doesn't wear the hearing aids? Could it be they are uncomfortable and need adjusting? Is inserting the batteries difficult because they are so tiny? Is he bothered by the amplified background noise? Once you know why he is resistant, you can consult the doctor who prescribed the devices.

■ ■ ■

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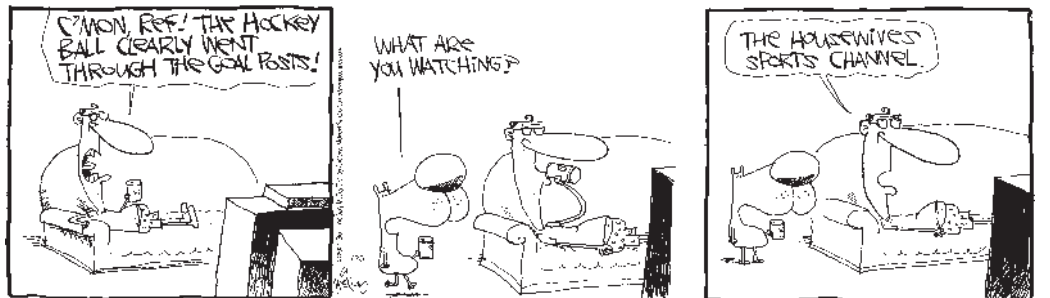
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ACROSS

1 Curved lines

5 Neither Rep. nor Dem.

8 Employ

12 Shoulder muscle, for short

13 Greek cross

14 Physics bit

15 Couturier Christian

16 Shows disdain for

18 Actress Lansbury

20 Light lunches

21 German car name

23 Aviv preceder

24 Forensic TV spin-off set in Florida

28 Shri!l barks

31 Louvre collection

32 Dele undoers

DOWN

34 Compete

35 Go by

37 Right of passage

39 Econ. statistic

41 Not even

42 Breakfast bowlful

45 In a senseless manner

49 Famous Boston dessert

51 Popular cookie

52 Author Dinesen

53 Transcript no.

54 Sty cry

55 — -bitty

56 MSN alternative

57 Dorothy's dog

1 "— pinch of salt ..."

2 Check

3 Drain blockage

4 Bill

5 "See you then!"

6 A Bobbsey twin

7 Union payment

8 Biker's bike

9 Classic horror movie cry

10 Map line

11 911 responders

17 Chow down

19 San — Obispo, CA

22 "That is to say ..."

24 Bottle top

25 Madrid

26 "Fantas-tic!"

27 "You're on!"

29 Brooch

30 Congeal

33 Antitoxins

36 Furtive

38 "Yeah, sure!"

40 Actress Dawber

42 Roman 202

43 Formerly, once

44 Women's links org.

46 Half a sextet

47 Fasting period

48 Music's Ono

50 Wall St. debut

Solution time: 26 mins.

Last Friday's Answer 01/25

A	B	E	P	L	E	A	P	R	O	M
L	A	W	R	I	V	C	R	E	D	O
A	C	E	T	O	N	E	S	I	V	E
S	H	R	I	N	E	P	B	S		
		E	T	S	A	R	M	A	N	I
M	A	C	R	O	E	C	O	B	E	D
A	L	L	S	A	L	E	F	R	E	E
M	O	C	C	S	L	E	A	R	S	
M	A	G	P	I	E	F	A	W		
		E	A	R	S	T	E	P	I	N
G	O	O	N	B	O	A	I	H	A	C
E	V	A	N	I	D	L	E	T	E	T
	O	T	E	C	A	M	S	H	T	S

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alicia Keys, 40; Mia Kirshner, 46; Ana Ortiz, 50; Jennifer Lewis, 64.

Happy Birthday: Think before you act. Refuse to let impulsiveness take over. Show passion, be strong and do your best to make your life better. Sort through the negatives and positives in your life in order to find balance. Honesty, integrity and discipline will lead to the success and happiness you deserve. Step up, be kind and make a difference. Your numbers are 5, 12, 19, 26, 31, 35, 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Let your intuition deliver information. Your gut feeling won't let you down and will save you from making an unnecessary mistake. Be direct, assess what you hear and move forward with confidence and discipline. You have plenty to gain if you are proactive. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Pay attention to what's going on at work or what industry is thriving and can provide a secure position. Gather information, take courses, enlist in trials and become part of the solution, not the problem. Step up and do what's right. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make decisions instead of letting someone dictate what you can pursue. Use intelligence and insight to take advantage of information that comes from a legitimate source. Verify facts quickly, and you'll get the opportunity to try something new and innovative. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can take action without spending money or getting involved in a joint venture. You'll

do best working alone and focusing on something in which you excel. Romance is on the rise, and sharing the evening hours with someone special will be rewarding. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll take one step forward and three steps back if you let someone interfere with your plans. Have the wherewithal to do your own thing and to structure your day to suit your needs. Be smart with your money. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A learning experience will have an impact on the way you approach work. Refuse to let anyone discourage or tempt you. It's essential to arm yourself with information, skills and techniques to give you an edge in a competitive market. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Put more emphasis on what you know and less on being physical. It's best to outsmart anyone who stands in your way with facts, figures and words. Put your money and possessions in a safe place, and run your household modestly. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Uncertainty regarding someone close to you will surface. Be frank, share your thoughts and listen carefully. Don't be fooled by compliments; cut to the chase and find out where you stand. It's best to be in the know before taking action. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Evaluate what's transpired; consider what's ahead before you get into a spirited discussion. Consider taking a wait-and-see approach to situations that will impact the way you earn your living. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Make a budget-friendly alteration conducive to something you want to pursue. Balance and compromise will be necessary when dealing with opposition. A unique solution will appease everyone and give you the freedom to reach your goal. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Refuse to let the changes going on around you lead to impulsive action. Be smart, think matters through and show compassion for others. How you handle situations will determine how well you do. Speak up, be fair and know when to compromise. ****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Use your voice to help a cause you believe in or someone you value. If you show uncertainty, you will confuse or mislead someone you need on your team. Stick to the truth and avoid gossip. **

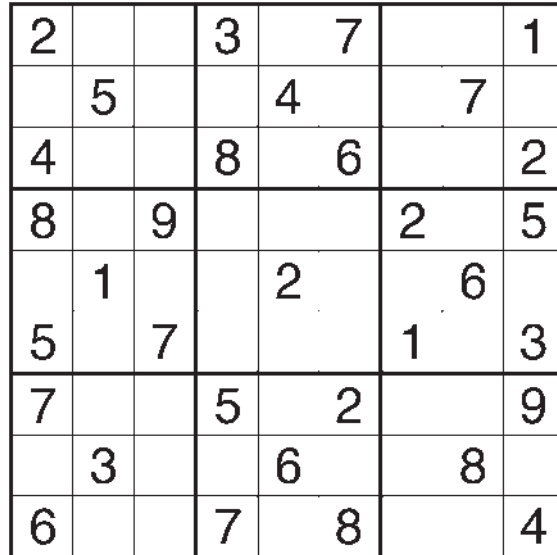
Birthday Baby: You are spontaneous, compassionate and insightful. You are determined and original.

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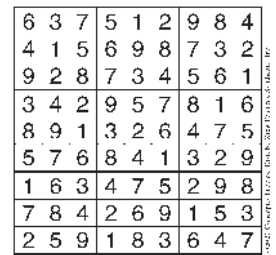
Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★ 1/25
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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

DOXXING IS UNETHICAL. Solution: 12 letters

F D V L O G G E R P E P O H S
V I E O N L I N E E O N U H S
G I N Z E W S S E R D D A R M
N A G A I I O P D S S M E E C
I C N I N L A D S O E A D G O
Y C H O L C A E N N O I A G W
L O R A K A I D B A L H C E L O
L U P E S A N D A N L H C E L O
U N T I E P T T L A U A A B K
B T T M N R E S E R V I C E E
R E E D A I L O R S C I E K R
E R F C R V O E P O F P D E S
B R E A L A N N S L E L L E C
Y L L I S T O R E V E R S E O
C T A R G E T B M E S S A G E

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Account, Address, Blogger, Board, Cell, Co-workers, Current, Cyberbullying, Down, Drop, Evade, Fees, Financial, Glean, Hack, Hope, Keep, Mail, Media, Message, Online, Opinion, Packet, People, Personal, Private, Real, Remedies, Reverse, Safe, Service, Shame, Shun, Silly, Site, Social, Target, Trace, Vandalize, Video, Vigilantes, Vlogger
Last Friday's Answer: Vineyards
To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Nets Big 3 hold off Heat for first win



NEW YORK (AP)—Kevin Durant scored 31 points, Kyrie Irving took over late and had 28 and the Brooklyn Nets overcame Bam Adebayo's career-high 41 points to beat the Miami Heat 128-124 on Saturday night.

James Harden finished with 12 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds and the Nets won for the first time with their three superstars playing together. They lost consecutive games with dismal defensive efforts in Cleveland and barely got enough stops to hold off a short-handed Heat team that had been limited to 81 points a night earlier.

But Irving helped pull them through, with 12 points in the final 5:48 after the Heat had erased nearly all of an 18-point deficit.

Joe Harris added 23 points and seven 3-pointers for Brooklyn.

Goran Dragic scored 19 points, and Kendrick Nunn and Duncan Robinson each had 18 for the Heat. Adebayo also had nine assists while blowing past his previous best scoring night of 30 points.

Lakers 101, Bulls 90

In Chicago, Anthony Davis scored a season-high 37 points against his hometown team, LeBron James added 17 points and 11 rebounds and Los Angeles beat the Bulls.

The defending NBA champions improved to 9-0 on the road and a league-best 13-4 overall.

Davis scored 26 points in the highest scoring half by a Laker this season as Los Angeles grabbed a 63-33 lead. The seven-time All-Star shot 14 of 21, hit two 3-pointers, and grabbed six rebounds.

Zach LaVine led Chicago with 21 points and 10 rebounds.

Nuggets 120, Suns 112, 2OT

In Phoenix, Nikola Jokic had 29 points and 22 rebounds, Jamal Murray hit a difficult 3-pointer to force overtime and Denver outlasted Phoenix in two overtimes.

It was the second straight night the teams played extra basketball. The Nuggets won 130-126 in a single overtime Friday after rallying from a 14-point halftime deficit.

Saturday's game was even more entertaining. Murray hit an off-balance 3-pointer with Deandre Ayton in his face as time expired in regulation. Phoenix's Jae Crowder responded with a 3-pointer with 0.7 seconds left in the first overtime.

The Suns played without All-Star guard Devin Booker for the first time this season. Averaging a team-high 22.9 points, he hurt his left hamstring Friday.

Crowder and Chris Paul led the Suns with 21 points each. Paul also had 13 assists.



AP
Miami Heat's Kelly Olynyk, center, takes a charge from Brooklyn Nets' Kevin Durant (7) during the first half of an NBA game Saturday, Jan. 23, 2021, in New York.

ond place in NBA history. Ray Allen is first with 2,973.

Curry finished with 24 points, seven rebounds and seven assists to lead Golden State.

Mike Conley scored 17 points and hit five 3s for the Jazz, who led by 30 at halftime and opened a 40-point bulge early in the fourth quarter.

Rockets 133, Mavericks 108

In Dallas, Eric Gordon scored a season-high 33 points, DeMarcus Cousins had his best game for Houston with 28 points and 17 rebounds and the Rockets beat the Mavericks.

John Wall had seven points and eight assists after missing five straight games with right knee soreness. It was the first game for Wall since the James Harden trade. The Rockets were without a key piece of that deal as Victor Oladipo rested a sore right quadriceps.

Luka Doncic scored 26 points while sitting the entire fourth quarter with the game out of reach. The Slovenian star was again without European sidekick Kristaps Porzingis, who rested his surgically repaired right knee as the Mavericks finished five games in seven days by completing their second back-to-back in that stretch.

Timberwolves 120, Pelicans 110

In Minneapolis, Naz Reid scored 20 points and Minnesota beat New Orleans to snap a four-game losing streak.

Anthony Edwards scored 18 points, and Jared Vanderbilt set career highs with 16 points and 11 rebounds for Minnesota.

Brandon Ingram led New Orleans with 30 points. Eric Bledsoe added 28, and Zion Williamson had 19 points and 11 rebounds.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic

	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	12	5	.706	0.0
Boston	8	6	.571	2.5
Brooklyn	10	8	.556	2.5
New York	8	9	.471	4.0
Toronto	6	9	.400	5.0

Central

Milwaukee	9	6	.600	0.0
Indiana	9	6	.600	0.0
Cleveland	8	7	.533	1.0
Chicago	7	9	.438	2.5
Detroit	3	13	.188	6.5

Southeast

Atlanta	8	7	.533	0.0
Orlando	7	9	.438	1.5
Miami	6	9	.400	2.0
Charlotte	6	9	.400	2.0
Washington	3	8	.273	3.0

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific

LA Lakers	13	4	.765	0.0
LA Clippers	12	4	.750	0.5
Phoenix	8	7	.533	4.0
Golden State	8	8	.500	4.5
Sacramento	6	10	.375	6.5

Southwest

Memphis	7	6	.538	0.0
Dallas	8	8	.500	0.5
San Antonio	8	8	.500	0.5
Houston	6	9	.400	2.0
New Orleans	5	10	.333	3.0

Northwest

Utah	12	4	.750	0.0
Portland	8	6	.571	3.0
Denver	9	7	.563	3.0
Oklahoma City	6	8	.429	5.0
Minnesota	4	11	.267	7.0

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

76ers 114, Pistons 110

In Detroit, Joel Embiid had 33 points and 14 rebounds, and his two free throws with 7.2 seconds left helped Philadelphia seal a victory over the Pistons.

Ben Simmons added 20 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the 76ers, and he made a couple big free throws of his own in the final

minute. Philadelphia is atop the Eastern Conference but didn't push its lead over the last-place Pistons into double figures until early in the fourth quarter. That was when Dwight Howard's dunk put the 76ers up 99-88.

Detroit trailed 110-108 after Jerami Grant made a 3-pointer

with 28.5 seconds left, but Simmons calmly made two free throws to push the lead to four. Delon Wright's layup made it 112-110, but Embiid closed the game out with his free throws and finished 12 of 17 from the line.

Wayne Ellington scored 17 points for the Pistons.

Jazz 127, Warriors 108

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell had 23 points, seven rebounds and six assists and Utah routed Golden State for its eighth straight victory.

Stephen Curry made five 3-pointers for the Warriors to give him 2,562 in his career—passing Reggie Miller for sec-

Aaron's death prompts call to change name: Braves to Hammers



ATLANTA (AP)—As his adopted hometown mourned Hank Aaron's death, some fans called on the Atlanta Braves to change their name to the Hammers in his honor.

"Hammerin' Hank" died Friday at age 86, drawing praise from all segments of society—including the current and former presidents—for his Hall of Fame career and providing inspiration to Black Americans by overcoming intense racism in his pursuit of baseball's home run record.

The governors of both Georgia and Alabama ordered flags to be flown at half-staff in honor of Aaron—the Hammer was born in the port city of Mobile and called Atlanta

home for much of his life.

The NFL's Atlanta Falcons, Major League Soccer's Atlanta United and Georgia Tech's football team all announced they would retire Aaron's trademark No. 44 for their 2021 seasons. The number was long ago retired by the Braves.

"May generations of Georgians continue to be inspired by his groundbreaking career and tremendous impact on our state and nation," Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey added, "He inspired many young boys and girls to pursue their dreams and pursue excellence in whatever they do."

The Braves opened up Truist Park to fans for the first time since the 2019 season, allowing them to pay socially distanced

tribute to Aaron on Friday and Saturday at his statue located in a monument garden on the main stadium concourse.

Other fans paid tribute at a display honoring his 715th homer, which is in a parking lot for the stadium formerly known as Turner Field. The site was the home of Atlanta Fulton-County Stadium, where the Braves played for 31 seasons after moving from Milwaukee in 1966.

The stadium was imploded after Turner Field became the Braves' new home in 1997, but a small section of fencing, a wall and a sign mark the spot where No. 715 broke Babe Ruth's hallowed home run record in 1974. Aaron finished his career with 755 homers, a standard that has since been

eclipsed by Barry Bonds.

The Hammer spent nearly all of his 23-year career with the Braves, whose nickname has drawn some criticism as being offensive to Native Americans.

Zimmerman staying with Nats

In Washington, now that he's set to play for the Nationals this season, Ryan Zimmerman might stick around a little longer, too.

Zimmerman and the Nationals made it official Saturday, announcing his \$1 million, one-year contract. The deal came after the Nats' longest-tenured player opted out of the coronavirus-shortened 2020 season.

"If I can settle into this role and do well this year, by no means does this have to be my

last year," the 36-year-old Zimmerman said on a Zoom call with reporters. "At least that's the way I'm looking at it."

Zimmerman is a two-time All-Star and bats right-handed. His playing time likely will diminish after Washington traded for switch-hitting first baseman Josh Bell from Pittsburgh last month.

It's still uncertain whether the National League will employ the designated hitter this year. It was used as part of the new rules added for the virus-abbreviated season.

Zimmerman, however, wasn't looking for a new opportunity in another city.

"Playing anywhere else would be really weird. Wouldn't really be worth it," he said.

Mahomes cleared to play against Bills



MISSOURI—
Kansas City
Chiefs quar-
terback Patrick
Mahomes is out

of concussion protocol and expects to play in the AFC championship game on Sunday against the Buffalo Bills, he announced Friday.

"I just got out of the protocol," Mahomes said. "The week has been a bunch of testing, a bunch of different things to make sure I'm good to go and there's no lingering effects or anything like that."

"Everything's been good and I went through what the three or four different doctors have said. Everything's looked well and I'm out of it now."

Mahomes was sidelined during the Chiefs' divisional-round win over Cleveland on Sunday after taking a hit to the head on a running play. The concussion he suffered forced him into the league's mandated protocol.

Mahomes has practiced every day this week, albeit in a limited capacity Wednesday and Thursday. He still took the majority of snaps.

Mahomes says he's not feeling any symptoms and is excited to join his teammates this weekend.

"You want to be out there, but you have to go through the protocol and do everything the right way," Mahomes said. "You have to look at it long-term as much as you look at it short-term, and talking to all the doctors and going through the testing, we have the belief there will be no lingering effects and I'll be able to go out there and be myself and be who I am every single week."

Mahomes is also battling a toe injury that he suffered against Cleveland, but says he's feeling better there, too.

"The next day it was very sore but every single day since then it's gotten a lot better," Mahomes said. "Luckily for me, it wasn't as bad as it looked and it's feeling a lot better."

Lions looking into trading Stafford

In Detroit, the Lions and quarterback Matthew Stafford are planning to part ways.

The Lions and Stafford have mutually agreed to explore the possibilities of trading him, according to a person with direct knowledge of the situation. The person spoke Saturday night to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team and Stafford did not announce the decision.

Stafford expressed an interest in being traded after the season ended and the team responded by tabling the idea until a new general manager



AP
In this Oct. 19, 2020 file photo, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes throws during the first half of an NFL game against the Buffalo Bills in Orchard Park, N.Y.

and coach were hired, the person said. Stafford was on a call with Lions general manager Brad Holmes and coach Dan Campbell earlier this week, according to the person, and they discussed moving on without each other.

Detroit drafted Stafford No. 1 overall in 2009 and he has two years left on a \$135 million, five-year contract.

Stafford surpassed the 45,000-yard mark in the 165th game of his career, the fewest

games an NFL player has had to reach that number, during the finale of the 2020 season. He threw three touchdown passes in that game against Minnesota to raise his career total to 282.

Like many of Stafford's accomplishments in Detroit, they were marred by a loss as the Lions fell to 5-11 last for their third straight double-digit loss season and his career record dropped to 74-90-1 in the regular season.

Detroit drafted the strong-

armed Stafford out of Georgia with the hopes he could help the franchise have playoff success, building on the one playoff victory it has earned since winning the 1957 NFL title.

Stafford, though, was 0-3 in the 2011, 2014 and 2016 post-seasons.

The Indianapolis Colts and New England Patriots are among the teams that may have an interest in Stafford, who turns 33 in February.

Stafford earned Pro Bowl

recognition in 2014 season and was AP's Comeback Player of the Year in 2011 after bouncing back from an injury-stunted start of his career. He is No. 16 on the league's all-time list with 45,109 yards passing and 282 passing touchdowns.

Playing for a team that was often trailing, he led 31 fourth-quarter comebacks in his career and earned 38 victories with game-winning drives.

Detroit drafted Ohio State cornerback Jeff Okudah last

Mbappe's PSG future uncertain as he hesitates over new deal

PARIS (AP)—When Kylian Mbappe's two goals took him back to the top of the French league's scoring charts on Friday night, the move seemed natural and inevitable.

What is far less certain is whether Mbappe will stay at PSG, or accept the challenge of moving to a more demanding club like Real Madrid next season.

After his brace in the 4-0 win against Montpellier took him to 14 goals—and 106 overall for PSG—the 22-year-old Mbappe said he has yet to decide whether to sign a new deal.

"We're in discussions with the club to find a plan. I'm thinking it over, because I think that if I sign then it's to commit myself long term to Paris Saint-Germain," Mbappe told broadcaster Telefoot following the match. "I'm very happy here, I've

always been very happy here. The fans and the club have always helped me. For that, I'll always be thankful."

Mbappe's contract expires at the end of June next year, as does striker partner Neymar's, and PSG sporting director Leonardo is working hard to persuade the two global stars to sign new contracts.

But the club faces stiff competition.

Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane is reportedly interested in making Mbappe a marquee signing to form a potentially prolific partnership with veteran Karim Benzema. Mbappe has also been linked with Premier League champion Liverpool.

Because of his young age—he is six years younger than Neymar and 11 years younger than Benzema—

Mbappe would represent the brightest future of any club.

"I want to think about what I want to do in the years to come, where I want to be," said Mbappe, who grew up in the Paris suburbs. "Yes, the time will soon come to make a choice.... If I had the answer now I would already have given it. I'm not trying to buy some time, I'm really thinking about it."

The Frenchman has already won the World Cup, scoring in the 2018 final against Croatia, but has yet to win the biggest trophies at club level. A key part of his reflection is whether he thinks he can do so with PSG.

Last season's defeat to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final profoundly frustrated Mbappe, and to many observers seemed like an opportunity missed for

PSG to finally win on the biggest stage after years of falling short in Europe.

Mbappe's current market value is estimated at 180 million euros (\$220 million), which is the same amount PSG paid to buy him from Monaco four years ago. But the longer he stays without putting pen to paper, the lower the fee becomes should PSG eventually sell him.

With all clubs losing vast amounts of money because of the coronavirus pandemic, and a collapsed TV deal further harming French soccer, Mbappe and Neymar are huge assets.

"I don't want to sign a contract and one year later say I want to leave," Mbappe said. "No, if I sign it's to stay and this calls for thought."

PSG fans will hope his heart rules his head.



Carol and company advance to finals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Carol Lee and her team, Georgia Tech, reached the finals of the ITA Kickoff Weekend, as the Yellow Jackets pulled off a 4-3 win over South Carolina

yesterday at the Ken Byers Tennis Complex in Atlanta.

Lee played both in the doubles and singles event with her and Gia Cohen's victory over Allie Gretkowski and Emma Shelton on Court 2, 6-3, handing the No. 12-ranked George

Tech the first win in the division. The Yellow Jackets went on to clinch early the lone point in the doubles event after Kenya Jones and Victoria Flores topped Megan Davies and Mia Horvit on



Court 1, 6-3.

In singles, Georgia Tech and the No. 14-ranked South Carolina split the six matches, but the Yellow Jackets escaped with the win after Mahak Jain rallied past Ana Cruz

in the last singles game, 1-6, 6-3, 7-5.

Georgia Tech's two other singles wins were courtesy of Flores (over Emma Shelton, 6-3, 4-6, 6-1) and Jones (against Horvit, 6-2, 6-4). Lee was the No. 5 singles player

for the Yellow Jackets and lost to Silvia Chinellato, 2-6, 4-6.

With the close victory, Georgia Tech arranged a championship duel against Duke, which eliminated No. 22 Michigan in the other dual match, 4-1. The finals is scheduled for Sunday

Poirier knocks out McGregor in 2nd round

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Dustin Poirier stopped Conor McGregor with a flurry of punches midway through the second round Sunday, avenging his loss to the Irish superstar with a knockout victory at UFC 257.

Poirier (26-7) caught McGregor with a series of shots to the head before buckling his knees with two left hands. Poirier then sent McGregor to the canvas with a short right hand and finished it at 2:32 of the second, setting off stunned excitement among the few thousand screaming fans allowed inside the Etihad Arena on Yas Island.

"I think this is a title fight," Poirier said of their lightweight bout. "I'm the champion."

In his first fight in a year, McGregor (22-5) had a strong first round before he was stopped by punches for the first time in his mixed martial arts career. McGregor, whose previous four losses all came by submission, stayed on the canvas for several moments afterward, gathering himself after his second loss in his three MMA fights since 2016.

"You know, it's hard to overcome inactivity over long periods of time," said Mc-



Dustin Poirier, right, and Conor McGregor exchange shots during their bout at UFC 257 at the Etihad Arena on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi.

Gregor, who hadn't fought since beating Donald Cerrone in 40 seconds last January. "I just wasn't as comfortable as I needed to be, but Dustin is

some fighter. If you put in the time, you're going to get cozy in here. I have to dust it off and come back, and that's what I will do. ... I'll take my licks,

but I'm gutted."

McGregor and Poirier met for the first time in September 2014 as featherweights, and McGregor won by knockout

in just 106 seconds during his incredible early-career success. McGregor became the featherweight champion 15 months later, while Poirier rebuilt his career with just one loss in his next 11 fights.

With a second chance to derail McGregor while boosting his own hopes of regaining the lightweight title, Poirier didn't miss.

"We're 1-1, so maybe we have to do it again," Poirier said.

Sporting a shaved head and a beard, McGregor pushed the action early against Poirier, who landed an early takedown before getting backed against the cage for stretches of the first round. But Poirier bothered and battered McGregor with leg kicks throughout the fight before throwing the punches that ended it.

In the co-main event at UFC 257, three-time Bellator lightweight champion Michael Chandler made a stunning UFC debut with a violent knockout of New Zealand's Dan Hooker midway through the first round.

Chandler could be the next matchup for Poirier in a fight for the lightweight title apparently vacated by long-reigning 155-pound champ Khabib Nurmagomedov, who announced his retirement after his final victory last fall. Nurmagomedov has beaten both McGregor and Poirier in the past 2 1/2 years.

UFC President Dana White so far has been unable to persuade Nurmagomedov to go back on his vow to his mother to quit the sport after his father's death, not even for a wildly lucrative rematch with McGregor, who repeatedly vowed to fight on after this

loss to Poirier.

McGregor has not fought regularly in recent years, but his popularity was undiminished: UFC 257 is expected to be one of the most popular pay-per-view events in the

promotion's history, according to White, and distribution problems in the U.S. early in the

PPV portion of the card led fans to bombard social media and ESPN with complaints.

Chandler's long-anticipated UFC arrival was worth the wait for his 27th professional fight in a career that began in 2009.

After a deliberate start, Chandler (22-5) jabbed to the body as he lunged forward and caught Hooker with a left hand to the face that crumpled his opponent. Chandler finished a dazed Hooker with punches on the ground before climbing atop the cage and doing a full standing backflip into the octagon from atop the fence.

And Chandler was still fired up in his post-fight interview, calling the bout "the greatest moment of my professional life."

"Conor McGregor! Surprise, surprise, there's a new king in the lightweight division," Chandler added. "Dustin Poirier, your time is coming. And Khabib, if you ever do see fit to grace us with your presence back here in the UFC octagon in your quest for 30 (victories), you know you've got to beat somebody, so beat me—if you can!"

Marina Rodriguez opened the pay-per-view portion of UFC 257 by upsetting fellow Brazilian strawweight contender Amanda Ribas. Rodriguez got a second-round stoppage with a flurry of punches and a knee in the opening minute.

BACK

From Page 20

for girls high school, while the boys division has more teams with 11.

Cesar Libut coaches both GCA 1 and 2 and though he admits it will be tougher winning the championship this year after having dominated the girls indoor volleyball for the last three seasons, he is just thankful for the opportunity to get back into play.

"This is right next to normal. Our students are given the opportunity to go out and play again as a team. It's going to be a big adjustment because this is a sand court, but regardless, it is really just great to see kids having a good time playing the sport they love again after a very long break," Libut said.

Meanwhile, Katrina Costales of MHS 3 said it's a relief to finally do something together away from their computers.

"When COVID came, we're mostly online doing school stuff. Now, it's nice to be with our teammates, play-

ing together outside," the MHS senior said.

PSS Student Support Services Athletic Program director Nick Gross was present in last weekend's kick-off and hopes that the beach volleyball competition will be the start of brighter things to come for interscholastic sports in the CNMI this year.

"We are darn excited to have this six-week adventure. The kids are starving for interscholastic sports competition," said Gross, who had a test-run for school tournaments when he worked with Northern Marianas Athletics in holding a cross country season late last year.

Gross thanked PSS and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force for allowing them to hold the competition. He also acknowledged the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan management for providing a venue for the games and the MHS JR-TOC for their logistic support.

"Everyone is pitching in to see our youth get back into sports safely," Gross said.



A Mt. Carmel School 1 player, right, gets ready for a return down the net, while a Marianas High School 4 player waits for the ball to drop during their game in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand courts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

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tackle the next discipline.

Still somewhat apprehensive about going into the gym? Bring someone with you to keep you in high spirits. You don't know how to approach your nutrition, consult with a registered dietician or qualified trainer.

Q: When I first started losing weight, it was going along smoothly. I was happy to see the scale going down at a fairly quick rate. But after a month and a half it has slowed down.

What can I do to speed it up again?

A: I understand the strong desire to expedite results, but you need to stop beating yourself up over what is essentially a natural part of the process. One way or another your energy expenditure (how many calories you burn) will drop the further along you're in a deficit. Meaning, your metabolism will slow down. That's simply the adaptation that naturally occurs in ANY diet.

Being judicious with your approach, getting in sufficient protein, and progressive strength training attenuates that.



**Nets Big 3
hold off Heat
for first win**

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SaipanTribune Sports

**Mahomes
cleared to
play against
Bills**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Marianas High School 3 player makes a return to MHS 4 during their game in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand courts.



WELCOME RETURN TO COMPETITION

They're back

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The frequent high-fives, the beaming smiles, the relentless hustle plays, and loud call for the ball—all indicated how much students missed interscholastic competitions.



After majority of school tournaments last year were abruptly canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CNMI students welcomed with open arms the resumption of competition among their peers with the 2020-2021 Public School Sys-

tem Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League kicking off last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand courts.

"It feels good to be back. Kind of nostalgic even though we are playing on a different field," said Grace Christian Academy player Katriel Saures.

"The last time we played

volleyball was in an indoor court at the Marianas High School Gymnasium in October 2019 and then COVID came in 2020 and everything changed. The past several months were very challenging for us students who are used to going out, getting involved in academics and sports activities," she added.

Saures plays for GCA 2,

which debuted in last weekend's event against MHS 1. She was also part of the GCA squad that won the indoor championship in the 2019-2020 season against Saipan International School. Eight other squads are competing in this year's interscholastic beach volleyball tournament

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Starting off on the right track and plateaus

Without question, 2020 has been an eventful year. One for the books. What made this past year particularly noteworthy for me isn't because of someone allegedly eating a bat soup dish then the next thing you know we're all stuck indoors. It's not even because of how apocalyptic things look right now.

The big detail on my mind is the moment it hit me. She tapped me on the shoulder, "I have a present for you." Half asleep I said, "Give it to me tomorrow." Within seconds, as you can probably tell curiosity got the best of me.

So, I opened it up.

"I'm going to be a dad?!"

I've made it pretty well known that we need to appreciate the importance of making subtle modifications in our training and nutrition. Well, in my case this is going to be a huge (blissful) adjustment on every single front.

Q: Got any tips on how to start off on the right track?

A: Starting a diet and exercise program is by no means pleasant. The pertinent issue that needs to be addressed is rigidity. Being too restrictive at the onset is, more or less, futile. We're nearing the end of the first month of the new year, and it should come as

no surprise that a large percentage of you with a resolution to get in better shape will be unsuccessful.

Don't take this the wrong way, I'm not trying to sound like a Debbie Downer. The point here is: you should use this period to establish sound lifestyle and dietary habits in-

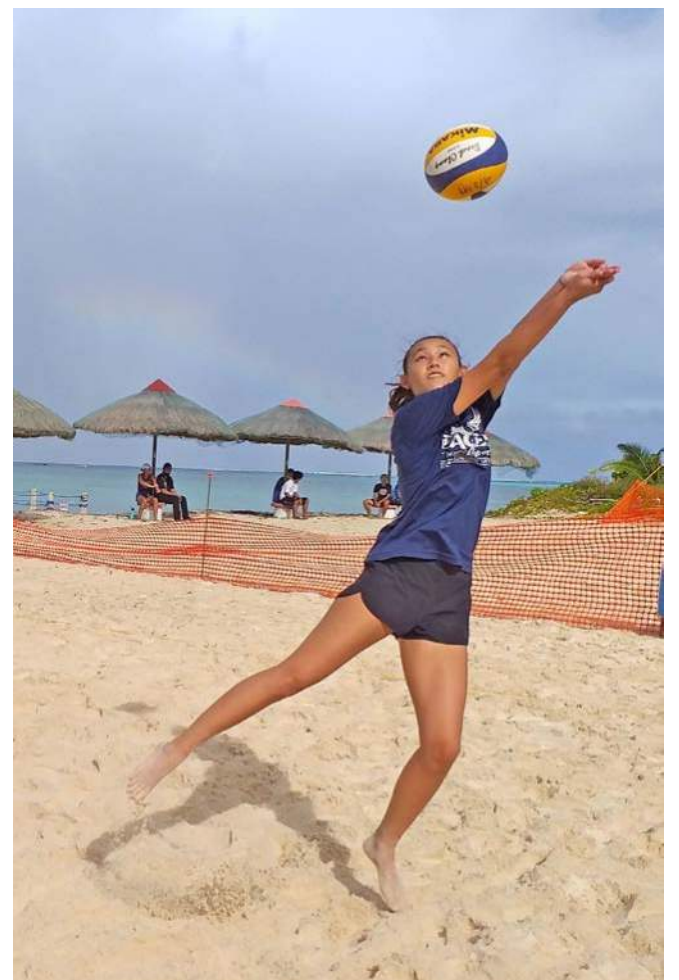
stead of biting off more than you can chew. As such, it's a good bet to discover what strategy serves as a happy medium for you. Find ways to build competency in each domain one at a time then

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Ask DRE:

By DRE DELOS SANTOS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Dre Delos Santos writes about fitness and nutrition for Saipan Tribune and TAGA Sports. He is a personal trainer at Gold's Gym. He is featured on fitness sites such as Weight Watchers, T-Nation, and STACK.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Grace Christian Academy 2's Hye Jin Elliot receives a shot from MHS 1.